

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Friday, May 15, 2015

Desert Shield



Obama, Gulf Countries to Increase Security Cooperation

President Barack Obama makes a statement with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council at Camp David, Md., May 14, 2015. Obama met with the representatives of six Persian Gulf nations Thursday, seeking to convince them of Washington's commitment to their security.

(Doug Mills/The New York Times)

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An advertisement for Shiva's Gold & Gems. It features several diamond rings, some with large yellow diamonds and others with white diamonds, displayed against a dark blue background. The Shiva's logo is prominently featured at the bottom left.

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House passes bill for Congress to review Iran nuclear deal

DEB RIECHMANN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The U.S. Congress on Thursday sent President Barack Obama a bill to give lawmakers the power to review and potentially reject a nuclear deal with Iran.

The House overwhelmingly passed the measure, 400-25, a reflection of lawmakers' insistence on having a say in what could be a significant international accord to get Iran to curb its nuclear program in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

Getting a deal would enhance Obama's foreign policy record, and while the Republican-led Congress doesn't want to see a nuclear-armed Iran, they are skeptical about Iranian compliance and have demanded time to review the fine points of any agreement the White House reaches with Tehran.

Presidential spokesman Josh Earnest said again Thursday that Obama would sign the bill into law. Negotiators from the U.S. and five other nations are rushing to reach a deal with Tehran by the end of

June. As the House voted, Obama met at the Camp David presidential retreat with Arab leaders in hopes of convincing them that U.S. overtures to Iran would not come at the expense of commitments to their security in the region. The Iran nuclear legislation would bar Obama from waiving congressional sanctions for at least 30 days while lawmakers examine any final deal. The bill would stipulate that if senators disapprove of the deal, Obama would lose his current power to waive certain economic penalties Congress has imposed on Iran.

The bill, which was passed last week by the Senate on a 98-1 vote, would require Congress to pass a resolution of disapproval to reject the deal, an action that Obama almost certainly would veto. Congress then would have to muster votes from two-thirds of each chamber to override the veto.

Even if Congress rejects his final nuclear deal with Tehran, however, Obama could use his executive pen to offer a hefty portion



House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington. The U.S. Congress on Thursday sent President Barack Obama a bill to give lawmakers the power to review and potentially reject a nuclear deal with Iran. The House overwhelmingly passed the measure, 400-25.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

of sanctions relief on his own. He could take unilateral actions that — when coupled with European and U.N. sanctions relief — would allow a deal to be implemented.

Rep. Ed Royce, the Republican chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, backed the measure, saying it would strengthen the U.S. negotiating position with Tehran. "Instead of Iranian negotiators knowing that they

can wear down the administration, this now injects Congress as an important backstop," Royce said.

New York Rep. Eliot Engel, top Democrat on the panel, urged bipartisan passage, saying, "Let's get this bill to the president's desk with a single voice."

At the same time, he lamented that the nuclear talks were not addressing Iran's threat to destroy Israel, Americans being held captive in the country,

Iran's backing of militant groups and its involvement in Iraq, Yemen and Syria.

Separately, the House unanimously passed a bill, 423-0, to impose new sanctions on Hezbollah's fundraising channels and restrict its ability to use its funds to support global terrorist activities. Iran is a strong backer of the Lebanese Hezbollah, which was designated as a terrorist group by the U.S. in the mid-1990s. □

Kerry off to China, SKorea with security, trade agenda

MATTHEW LEE

AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State John Kerry is heading to China and South Korea for a weekend of meetings that will focus on security concerns and trade.

Kerry leaves Washington on Thursday for Beijing, where he will press Chinese authorities over what Washington believes are their provocative actions in the East and South China seas. His visit on Saturday will also set the stage for annual U.S.-China economic and strategic talks this summer and a trip to the U.S. by China's president in the fall.

While Kerry's agenda will be broad, rising tensions between China and its smaller neighbors over maritime disputes are likely to dominate his discussions with senior Chinese offi-

cials, including President Xi Jinping, State Councilor Yang Jiechi, Foreign Minister Wang Yi and the country's top military officer. Concern is growing in Washington and elsewhere that Beijing is building artificial islands to assert military control over the disputed areas. American lawmakers and Asian nations are pressing the administration for a more robust response to China's actions.

U.S. officials said this week Kerry would be carrying a message that China's large-scale land reclamation and general behavior in the South China Sea will hurt China's image and its relations with its neighbors and, potentially, with the United States itself.

China has rattled the region with its assertive claims both over islands held by Japan in the East China Sea, and in the South Chi-

na Sea, where islands and reefs are contested by China and five other Asian claimants. China has reclaimed about 2,000 acres of dry land since 2014 that could be used as airstrips

or for military purposes, according to U.S. officials.

China claims the islands are its territory. Its Foreign Ministry on Wednesday voiced serious concern about a Wall Street Jour-

nal report, which cited anonymous U.S. officials, that the U.S. is considering sending military ships and planes to challenge Chinese claims to islands it is building. □

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Obama, Gulf Countries to Increase Security Cooperation

JULIE PACE

Associated Press

CAMP DAVID, Maryland

(AP) — President Barack Obama reassured anxious Persian Gulf nations on Thursday that the United States is committed to helping protect their security, including the potential

leaders of the six-nation council.

He expressed his hope that their cooperation would help achieve "the kind of peace and good neighborliness with Iran that I think so many of the countries here seek."

Obama and the Arab lead-

While the U.S. has long provided military support to partners in the Gulf, the joint statement pledged new cooperation on counterterrorism, maritime security, cybersecurity and ballistic missile defense, among other things.

Obama's separate nego-

sured that the objective is to deny Iran the ability to obtain a nuclear weapon" and that all pathways to such a weapon would be cut off. He added that it was too early to know if a final nuclear agreement would be acceptable, saying, "We don't know if the Iranians will accept the terms they need to accept."

As the leaders gathered, an Iranian naval patrol boat fired on a Singapore-flagged commercial ship in the Persian Gulf. A U.S. official said it was an apparent attempt to disable the ship over a financial dispute involving damage to an Iranian oil platform.

The incident took place a bit south of the island of Abu Musa just inside the Gulf, according to the U.S. official, who was not authorized to discuss details by name. The White House said no Americans were involved in the incident.

Rhodes said that while the incident did not come up in Thursday's discussions, it was "exactly the type of challenge" the Gulf nations are focused on.

Al-Jubeir, for his part, said, "The Iranians should not be allowed to get away with it. ... For whatever reason they're doing it, it's got to stop."

Obama rarely uses Camp David for personal or official business. White House aides hoped the more intimate setting would lead to a more candid conversation with the Arab allies.

Just two other heads of state — the emirs of Qatar and Kuwait — joined Obama at Camp David. Saudi Arabia, United Arab

Emirates, Oman and Bahrain all sent lower-level but still influential representatives.

As the leaders gathered around a large table in the Laurel lodge, the most notable absence was Saudi King Salman. On Sunday, Saudi Arabia announced that the king was skipping the summit, two days after the White House said he was coming.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman were representing Saudi Arabia instead.

The White House and Saudi officials insisted the king was not snubbing Obama. But there are indisputable signs of strain in the long relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, driven not only by Obama's Iran overtures but also the rise of Islamic State militants and a lessening U.S. dependency on Saudi oil. The Gulf summit comes as the U.S. and five other nations work to reach an agreement with Iran by the end of June. The White House says a nuclear accord could clear the way for more productive discussions with Iran about its reputed terror links.

The U.S. has criticized Iran's support for Hezbollah, as well as attacks carried out by Iran's Quds Force. In 2011, the Obama administration accused Iran of plotting to kill the Saudi ambassador to the United States in Washington.

The Saudis are also particularly concerned about the situation in Yemen, where Houthi rebels with ties with Iran have ousted the U.S.- and Saudi-backed leader.□



President Barack Obama speaks with Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the emir of Kuwait, during a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council at Camp David, Md., May 14, 2015. Obama's push for a nuclear deal with Tehran has raised concern among Middle Eastern allies, and four of the six Gulf nations did not send their top leaders to the summit. Secretary of State John Kerry sits fourth from right.

(Doug Mills/The New York Times)

tial use of military force, in a time of "extraordinary changes and some great challenges."

He offered assurances that an international nuclear agreement with Iran would not leave the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council more vulnerable.

"I was very explicit ... that the United States will stand by our GCC partners against external attack," Obama pledged at the conclusion of a summit with

ers met in a rare summit at Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland's Catoctin mountains.

The leaders issued a joint statement saying that in the event of aggression, the U.S. stood ready to work with the Arab nations "to determine urgently what action may be appropriate, using the means at our collective disposal, including the potential use of military force, for the defense of our GCC partners."

iations in recent months to curb Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief have strained relations with many of America's traditional partners in the region. Gulf states fear that if Iran gets an influx of money when sanctions are lifted, it will embolden what they see as Tehran's aggression in the region.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir called Thursday a productive day. He said the Arab leaders were "as-

In hindsight, Jeb Bush says, he wouldn't have invaded Iraq

STEVE PEOPLES

Associated Press

TEMPE, Arizona (AP) — After days of refusing to say whether, with the benefit of hindsight, he would have ordered the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Jeb Bush relented Thursday and said he would not have invaded.

"If we're all supposed to answer hypothetical questions, knowing what we know now, what would you have done?" Bush said with a twinge of annoyance while campaigning in Arizona. "I would have not engaged. I would not have gone into Iraq."

It was an answer the former Florida governor and likely Republican candidate for president had refused to give in several public appearances this week, even as most of his Republican rivals did so and criticized him for sidestepping the question.

Bush said Thursday his resistance was caused both by loyalty to his older brother, George W. Bush, who ordered the invasion as president, and to the families of those lost in the decade-long war.

"I don't go out of my way to disagree with my broth-

er," Bush told a group of reporters when asked about the shift. "I am loyal to him." That loyalty could cast a shadow over Bush's all-but-certain presidential bid, where his family name is both his strongest political asset and liability. He would become the third member of his family to serve as president should he follow his father and brother to the White House.

The Iraq war is among the most defining aspects of George W. Bush's presidency. More than 4,400 U.S. service personnel died, with many more severely wounded, in a war that cost at least \$1.7 trillion and was justified by faulty intelligence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. None were ever found.

The upcoming presidential contest will likely yield other moments when Bush is asked uncomfortable questions about his brother's time in office.

Bush said he had not spoken to his brother before talking about Iraq on Thursday, but said the U.S. needs "to re-engage (in Iraq), and do it in a more forceful way." Bush and other Republicans in the



Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush speaks at a Clark County Republican Party dinner in Las Vegas. After days of refusing to say whether, with the benefit of hindsight, he would have ordered the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Jeb Bush relented Thursday and said he would not have invaded.

(AP Photo/John Locher)

presidential mix often argue that President Barack Obama erred by so completely withdrawing U.S. forces from Iraq in 2011.

Obama has sent a few thousand troops back into the country to help the Iraqi military fight Islamic State militants, and the next president is sure to face ongoing issues of stability there and elsewhere in the Middle East.

"We can't do this by remote control," Bush said. As Bush struggled this week

to address the issue, several Republican presidential prospects said definitively

they would not have invaded Iraq based on information known today □.

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8th body found in wreckage of deadly train derailment

GEOFF MULVIHILL

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The engineer in this week's deadly train derailment doesn't remember the crash, his lawyer said Thursday, complicating the investigation into why the Amtrak passenger train was going more than twice the allowed speed when it shot off a sharp curve.

With an unidentified eighth body found in the wreckage Thursday, it was the deadliest U.S. train accident in nearly six years. The Philadelphia mayor said all passengers and crew were now accounted for.

In yet another curious turn in the investigation, Robert Sumwalt of the National Transportation Safety Board said Thursday that the train sped up in the last minute or so before the wreck, going from 70 mph (110 kph) to over 100 mph (160 kph).

He said it is not clear yet



Mayor Michael Nutter, center at podium, addresses the media during a news conference near the scene of a deadly train derailment Thursday, May 14, 2015, in Philadelphia. An Amtrak train headed to New York City derailed and crashed in Philadelphia on Tuesday night killing eight people and sending more than 200 passengers and crew to area hospitals.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans)

whether the speed was increased manually. So far, he said, investigators have found no problems with the track or the signals.

Questions also grew about why a track technology

that would have prevented the train from going over the speed limit Tuesday night had not yet been installed as planned.

The 32-year-old engineer, Brandon Bostian, has so far

refused to speak with police.

"He remembers coming into the curve. He remembers attempting to reduce speed and thereafter, he was knocked out," Robert

Goggin told ABC. He said the last thing Bostian remembered was coming to, looking for his bag, retrieving his cellphone and calling for help.

Goggin said his client, who suffered a concussion and had 14 staples in his head, was distraught when he learned of the devastation. He said his client "co-operated fully" with police and immediately consented to a blood test and surrendered his cellphone. He believes his client's memory will likely return once the head injury subsides.

The derailment happened along the country's busiest rail corridor between Washington and Boston, where the national passenger railway carries 11.6 million passengers a year. Amtrak suspended all service until further notice along the Philadelphia-to-New York stretch, forcing thousands of people to find other ways to travel. □

Report: US Secret Service agents 'likely' alcohol-impaired

ALICIA A. CALDWELL

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two senior U.S. Secret Service agents were "more likely than not" impaired by alcohol when they drove a government vehicle through a secure area at the White House earlier this year, a government monitor concluded in a report released late Wednesday. Homeland Security Inspector General John Roth found that the agents spent about five hours at a bar during and after a retirement party for a colleague at the agency that protects the president and ran up a "significant" bar tab before driving to the White House on March 4. Their tab included eight

glasses of scotch, two vodka drinks, three beers and a glass of wine.

Marc Connolly, the deputy special agent in charge of the Presidential Protection Division, announced his retirement in advance of the report's release.

George Ogilvie, the assistant special agent in charge of the agency's Washington field office, has been placed on administrative leave, the agency said Wednesday.

Both men denied being drunk and told investigators they only had a few of the drinks over the course of the night. Ogilvie said some of the drinks on his tab, including five glasses of scotch, were given to other people at the bar,

though he could not recall who received the drinks.

Secret Service Director Joseph Clancy said Wednesday he was "disappointed and disturbed at the apparent lack of judgment described in this report. Behavior of the type described in the report is unacceptable and will not be tolerated."

Roth's report said Ogilvie was driving and Connolly was his passenger when Ogilvie drove his government-owned vehicle into the secured zone where on-duty Secret Service officials were investigating a suspicious package that had been left in the White House complex by a fleeing driver.

Ogilvie "had to do consid-

erable maneuvering" as he drove slowly through the area and pushed a larger construction barrier about five feet (1.5 meters) with the bumper of his vehicle. Clancy, who was not told about the incident for several days,

previously told lawmakers that the agents "nudged" the barrier as they drove into the White House complex.

Roth's report said "this was no mere 'bump,' but rather extended contact to shove the barrel out of the way." The report said the pair also unwittingly drove within inches of the suspicious item as they made their way through the secured area.

Roth said officers at the

scene didn't smell alcohol on either Ogilvie or Connolly, but three officers thought something was "not right" about the pair. A watch commander was later told by an officer that "they may be drunk."

No field sobriety tests were given that night and both men were allowed to drive their government vehicles home from the White House.

Roth told the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Thursday that the agents' behavior was "troubling." When asked if the pair should be punished, Roth said while discipline will fall to the Secret Service, he "believes there should be some consequences." □



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US Financial Front:

Monthly average of unemployment claims falls to 15-year low

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of people seeking U.S. unemployment benefits ticked lower last week, pushing down the four-week average of applications to its lowest level since April 2000.

Weekly applications fell 1,000 to a seasonally adjusted 264,000 last week, the Labor Department said Thursday. That is just above a 15-year low reached three weeks ago. The average, a less volatile figure, dropped 7,750 to 271,750, the lowest in 15 years.

Applications are a proxy for layoffs, so their very low level is evidence that Americans are enjoying solid job security. It is also a sign employers are confident enough in the economy to keep their staffs, despite signs of sluggish growth.

"Claims continue to show no sign of the labor market weakening — if anything, the opposite," Jim O'Sullivan, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, said in a note

to clients.

The economy likely shrank in the first three months of the year. Economists blame a strong dollar, low oil prices that triggered cutbacks at oil and gas companies, and harsh winter weather that discouraged spending. A stronger dollar makes U.S. exports overseas more expensive, restraining sales.

Most analysts predict the economy is expanding in the April-June quarter, though the bounce-back hasn't been as strong as many had hoped.

Consumers spent cau-



Bianca Medici, left, a corporate recruiter for CDM Media, speaks with job applicants during a National Career Fairs job fair in Chicago. The Labor Department released weekly jobless claims on Thursday, May 14, 2015.

(AP Photo/M. Spencer Green)

tiously in April, according to a report on retail and

restaurant sales Wednesday. Americans have not

ramped up their spending so far this year, as economists had predicted, despite strong job gains and gas prices that are \$1 a gallon cheaper than a year ago.

The weak retail sales report led JPMorgan Chase to cut its forecast for second quarter growth to an annual rate of 2 percent, down from 2.5 percent.

Still, employers are hiring at a steady pace, which means more Americans are earning paychecks. That could fuel stronger growth in the second half of this year. □

US producer prices dip as food, energy costs drop

PAUL WISEMAN

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A sharp drop in the cost of gasoline and food pushed down overall U.S. producer prices in April.

The Labor Department said Thursday that its producer price index fell 0.4 percent last month after rising 0.2 percent in March. But even excluding volatile food and energy categories, the

core index slipped 0.2 percent last month, brought down in part by lower shipping costs.

The index measures prices of goods and services before they reach consumers. Over the past year, wholesale prices have dropped 1.3 percent, the most since Labor revamped the index in late 2010.

Wholesale energy prices dropped 2.9 percent from

March, pulled lower by a 4.7 percent drop in gasoline prices. Food prices slid 0.9 percent last month; wholesale egg prices plunged 25.3 percent, most since June 2007. Core producer prices were also brought down last month by a sharp drop in markups charged by gasoline wholesalers and retailers. Wholesalers of machinery also reported lower margins, likely reflect-

ing a sharp rise in the dollar, which makes U.S. goods less competitive in overseas markets, noted Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics. Federal Reserve officials are monitoring measures of inflation as they weigh whether to raise the short-term interest rate they control. They have kept it near zero for more than six years. □

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AP Newsbreak: Israeli government sworn in after delay

IAN DEITCH

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new government was sworn in late

road ahead for his narrow coalition.

Almost two months after winning Israel's election, Netanyahu presented his new Cabinet to parliament

reportedly due to last-minute disputes over ministerial appointments.

Netanyahu delivered a brief speech outlining his government's goals, which

ing three members to be escorted out and others to walk out in protest.

"Something here doesn't work well," Parliament Speaker Yuli Edelstein said at the opening of the session. He said that "under the circumstances" there was little to celebrate at the normally festive occasion.

The stormy session was the latest sign of the troubles Netanyahu faces as he begins a fourth term as prime minister.

Although Netanyahu's Likud Party captured 30 seats in the March 17 election, making it the largest party, he struggled to cobble together a majority coalition in the 120-seat parliament. It took him the full six weeks permitted by law to put together a coalition with just 61 seats, the slimmest majority possible.

The coalition includes two ultra-Orthodox religious parties and the centrist Kulanu — whose agendas are heavily focused on internal affairs. In last-minute negotiations, the nationalist Jewish Home Party, which is affiliated with the West Bank settler movement, extracted major concessions from Netanyahu.

The influence of Jewish

Home, along with the dominance of settler allies in Likud, makes it unlikely that Netanyahu will be able to make any bold peace initiatives. Netanyahu staked out hard-line positions during the campaign, saying he would not allow the creation of a Palestinian state on his watch. Although he later backtracked, the comments raised tensions with the U.S., which has made the establishment of a Palestinian state a top foreign policy goal.

With even a single disgruntled partner capable of bringing down the government, Netanyahu said he was "leaving the door open" for other parties to widen the coalition, and he has left the prestigious job of foreign minister vacant. Netanyahu said the current political system needs to be reformed to prevent frequent elections. Opposition leader Yitzhak Herzog rejected the prime minister's offer to join his coalition. He said it was "not a happy day" and called Netanyahu's government "a circus."

Herzog also criticized the lack of any political horizon with the Palestinians and predicted the government would not last long. □



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during the weekly cabinet meeting at his office in Jerusalem. Netanyahu's new government was sworn in late Thursday after a two-hour delay amid heckling by Arab lawmakers and harsh criticism from the opposition, indicating a tough road ahead for his narrow coalition.

(AP Photo/Sebastian Scheiner, Pool)

Thursday after a two-hour delay amid heckling by Arab lawmakers and harsh criticism from the opposition, indicating a tough

ahead of a celebratory swearing-in ceremony. But the proceedings were delayed following a request from Netanyahu's office,

he said would include striving for peace with the Palestinians. With the coalition dominated by hard-liners who oppose concessions to the Palestinians, his remarks drew laughter and heckling from Arab lawmakers, eventually prompt-

ing three members to be escorted out and others to walk out in protest.

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Yemen: Saudis, rebels trade charges of truce breaches

AHMED AL-HAJ

Associated Press

SANA'A, Yemen (AP) —

Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Iranian-backed Shiite rebels on Thursday traded charges of violating a humanitarian cease-fire, as a helicopter gunship belonging to the Saudi-led coalition struck a truck in northern Yemen, killing nine people.

The attack was the latest in a series of violent incidents marred the cease-fire and came as the rivalry over Yemen between Sunni powerhouse Saudi Arabia and Shiite, non-Arab Iran escalated, with a senior Iranian official directing unusually harsh comments at Riyadh.

The Saudi embassy in Washington said in a

statement that the rebels, known as Houthis, have "deliberately" breached the five-day truce, citing seven separate incidents in which forces guarding its border came under attack by rebels using mortars, rockets and sniper fire.

The Saudi statement, dated Wednesday but made available Thursday, also cited five separate incidents in which the rebels and their allies broke the cease-fire by targeting civilians or seeking to reinforce their fighting positions.

In a letter to the new U.N. envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed of Mauritania, a senior official from Ansar Allah, the Houthis' political arm,

said the coalition violated the cease-fire in roughly the same provinces cited in the Saudi complaint — Aden, Shabwa, Taiz, al-Dhale — as well as by staging airstrikes.

"Everyone carries a large responsibility to pressure the other party and to force it to commit to the respect of the truce," said the statement, signed by Mahdi al-Mashat, Ansar Allah's chief negotiator.

The attack by the coalition helicopter came on the second full day of the truce that went into effect nearly seven weeks after the coalition began airstrikes against the Shiite rebels and their allies — security and military forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. □



ECB's Draghi: Euro stimulus will continue

PAUL WISEMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi said the ECB's economic stimulus program is working but needs more time to bring European inflation back to healthier levels and restore consumer and business confidence.

Speaking Thursday at the International Monetary Fund, Draghi said the program — involving 1.1 trillion euros (\$1.3 trillion) in bond purchases — has "proven so far to be potent, more so than many observers anticipated."

Earlier this week, in fact, the 19 countries that use the euro currency reported the fastest economic growth in two years. And eurozone consumer prices stopped falling last month. The inflation report reduced fears that the region was in danger of slipping into a growth-killing spiral in which consumers put off spending because they expect future prices will be lower.

But Draghi was not ready to declare victory over Europe's long struggle with economic stagnation.

"After almost seven years of a debilitating sequence of crises, firms and households are very hesitant to take on economic risk," he said. He vowed that the bond-buying program "will stay in place as long as needed for its objective to be fully achieved on a truly sustained basis." □

China:

India's Modi meets Xi on visit amid warming ties

XI'AN, China (AP) — President Xi Jinping praised China's warming ties with India during a meeting Thursday between the leaders of Asia's rising powers and rivals, which included a rare touch of personal diplomacy for a Chinese leader. Xi met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a sprawling government guest house in Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi province, from which the president's family hails. China-India relations "are experiencing stable development and facing broad prospects," Xi was quoted as telling Modi by China's official Xinhua News Agency.

The exchanges highlight warming ties between the two powers — the world's most populous nations with a combined 2.6 billion people — despite their continuing rivalry and contrasting political systems. That trend has gained momentum by the personal authority enjoyed by the two men, who are widely seen as their countries' strongest leaders in years.

Modi's visit will "push forward the bilateral strategic partnership to achieve new progress, which has potential for greater development," Xi said.

Clad in traditional Indian dress, Modi earlier visited the museum dedicated to China's famed Terra Cotta Warriors and a Buddhist temple housing works translated from Sanskrit — a reminder of the ancient cultural links between the two Asian giants.

Amid heavy security, large crowds turned out to greet his motorcade, prompting the prime minister to tweet:

almost never receive their foreign counterparts in anything other than formal settings in Beijing.

nearly \$4 trillion in foreign currency reserves, China is ready to satisfy India's estimated \$1 trillion in demand



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping wave to journalists prior to their meeting in Xian, Shaanxi province, China, Thursday, May 14, 2015. Modi is visiting China this week to build friendship between the two Asian giants despite a long history of disputes and rivalries, along with some areas of cooperation, especially in the economic sphere.

(Kim Kyung-Hoon/Pool Photo via AP)

"Am very glad to see the enthusiasm among the people of China. People-to-people ties are always special."

The visit to the central Chinese city marks the first time Xi has hosted a visiting foreign leader in his ancestral home, a conscious display of hospitality underscoring his intention to build a strong personal relationship with Modi.

Xi is reciprocating the Indian leader's invitation to his own hometown of Ahmedabad during a visit to India last year. Chinese leaders

Xi said his September to India visit resulted in "an important consensus on promoting the bilateral strategic partnership of cooperation and forging a closer partnership of development," according to Xinhua. China is looking to India as a market for its increasingly high-tech goods, from high-speed trains to nuclear power plants, while India is keen to attract Chinese investment in manufacturing and infrastructure. With a slowing economy, excess production capacity and

for infrastructure projects such as airports, roads, ports and railways. Modi's top priority in China is finding ways to reduce India's \$48 billion trade deficit with its neighbor through greater market access for Indian goods and services and by convincing Chinese companies to manufacture in India. Indian and Chinese officials have said the sides plan to sign investment deals and trade agreements during Modi's visit worth about \$10 billion, the official China Daily newspaper reported Thursday. □

IS releases audio message purportedly from leader

BASSEM MROUE
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — The Islamic State group on Thursday released an audio message purportedly from its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who has not been seen or heard from in months. The 35-minute audio message posted on militant websites features a voice that sounds like al-Bagh-

dadi's exhorting all Muslims to take up arms and fight on behalf of the group's self-styled caliphate. The speaker references the Saudi-led air campaign against Shiite rebels in Yemen, which began on March 26, and harshly criticizes the Saudi royal family. "Islam was never a religion of peace. Islam is the religion of fighting," he said.

"No one should believe that the war that we are waging is the war of the Islamic State. It is the war of all Muslims, but the Islamic State is spearheading it. It is the war of Muslims against infidels."

"O Muslims go to war everywhere. It is the duty of every Muslim," the speaker said.

It was not immediately pos-

sible to verify whether the voice was al-Baghdadi's. In another indication the message was recorded recently, the speaker appears to refer to the thousands of people who fled Ramadi last month as the Islamic State group advanced on the town in Iraq's western Anbar province.

"If some of your relatives

are fighting against the religion of God and are loyal to Rawafid and Crusaders we will not hurt you," he said using a derogatory term to refer to Shiites. He called on Sunni members of the Iraqi police and army to repent because "when the hands of the mujahideen get you no repentance will be accepted." □

9 foreigners among 14 killed in Taliban attack in Kabul

L. O'DONNELL

A. SHAH
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Afghan president on Thursday condemned the Taliban attack on a Kabul guesthouse the previous night that killed 14 people, including nine foreigners, and said the brutal slayings will not undermine his government's efforts to achieve peace and stability.

Wednesday's attack was the most audacious assault by the insurgents in the Afghan capital since the start of their spring offensive. The foreigners killed included an American, a British citizen, an Italian, four Indian nationals and two Pakistanis.

Gunmen stormed the restaurant of the Park Palace Hotel in Kabul as it was hosting a party for foreigners around 8:30 p.m. local time, according to Kabul police chief Gen. Abdul Rahman Rahimi. The victims were killed during an hours-long siege that ended early Thursday morning. Five Afghans were also among the dead and sev-

en were wounded, including one Afghan policeman.

Though the Taliban have staged similar attacks in

foreigners living and working here — the latest assault was a blow to Ghani's government, which has been eager to project a sense of

end of last year, Afghan security forces have struggled to fend off Taliban attacks on their own. Ghani's statement said he



Afghan women walk past Park Palace guesthouse Thursday, May 14, 2015 after being attacked by gunmen in Kabul, Afghanistan. Gunmen stormed the guesthouse as it hosted a party for foreigners, and authorities said 14 people, including an American, were killed during an hours long siege that ended early Thursday morning. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)

the past on Kabul hotels and guesthouses — typically extremely well-guarded locations for the ever-dwindling number of for-

improvement in the security situation in the capital. But since the U.S. and NATO forces formally concluded their combat mission at the

had spoken to the leaders of the nations whose citizens were killed. He lashed out at the Taliban, saying the "terrorists and enemies

of Afghanistan cannot harm our country's relationships with other countries with these activities." The U.N. mission in Afghanistan also condemned the assault, saying in a statement Thursday that it was an "atrocity."

"Taliban statements on avoiding civilian casualties ring hollow when we set them against the latest killings," said UNAMA's human rights director Georgette Gagnon.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack in an email distributed to media. Their spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the hotel was targeted because of the presence of foreigners, including Americans there. In the claim, he said only one attacker was involved, armed with a Kalashnikov rifle, a suicide vest and a pistol — not three as the Afghan government reported. The Taliban often exaggerate their claims. The Afghan police, which kept the hotel cordoned off on Thursday, said all the attackers were killed in the shootout with security troops. □

Sahara extremists pledge allegiance to Islamic State group

PAUL SCHEMME
Associated Press

RABAT, Morocco (AP) — An extremist group based in the Sahara desert known for carrying out terror attacks in Algeria, Mali and Niger appears to have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group after years with its rival, al-Qaida.

If it is authenticated, the statement represents a

major shift among extremist groups in the vast Saharan regions — and the possible demise of one of the most notorious extremists in the desert.

The audio recording from the Mourabitoune group was sent to a Mauritanian news agency late Wednesday that has carried its statements in the past and was in the name of Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi, rath-

er than the group's founder, Moktar Belmoktar, who gained notoriety for the January 2013 assault on an Algerian gas complex.

"We call upon all the jihadi groups to pledge allegiance to the Caliph, to unify the word of the Muslims and align the ranks in front of the enemies of religion," said al-Sahrawi's statement, according to a translation by the U.S.-

based SITE Intelligence Group on Wednesday.

Belmoktar, once known as the most dangerous man in the Sahara, formed the Mourabitoune in August 2013, combined his own group with another and had recently renewed his allegiance to al-Qaida.

"If it's confirmed, then we need to wonder about the whereabouts of Belmoktar," said Djallil Louannas,

an expert on North African Islamic groups. "He's either been removed, or killed or they split." The group most recently attacked a restaurant filled with foreigners in the Malian capital, Bamako, in March. Belmoktar's most well-known operation was on an Algerian gas plant that resulted in a standoff with the Algerian military and the death of 39 foreign workers. □



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Search for 15 trapped gold miners continues in Colombia

CESAR GARCIA
Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Scores of rescuers resumed the search for 15 gold miners missing and feared dead Thursday after the water poured into the underground shafts where they were digging.

Authorities said Wednesday's accident at El Tunel mine in the northwestern town of Riosucio was likely triggered by an explosion or power outage that disabled pumps used to extract water and supply oxygen to work crews as deep as 90 feet (27 meters) below ground.

Yeison Gutierrez, 34, said he was able to save several colleagues because he was one of the few

miners who knew how to swim. But one co-worker slipped through his hands and didn't make it above ground.

"I swam to the surface fighting against the water and the air pressure, that's how we were saved," Gutierrez told The Associated Press from the mine where he's assisting rescuers.

President Juan Manuel Santos called on rescuers to "spare no effort" in the search. Family members huddled near the mine through the night as crews used pumps to remove water that had raced into three vertical shafts from the adjacent Cauca river. Authorities said it could take at least three days to clear the mine. □



Miners and rescue workers work at the entrance to the El Tunel gold mine in Riosucio, Colombia. Fifteen miners are missing and feared dead after water poured into the underground shafts where they were digging early Wednesday. Authorities said the accident was likely triggered by an explosion or power outage that disabled pumps used to extract water and supply oxygen to work crews.

(AP Photo/Juan Augusto Cardona)

Venezuela congress head requests travel ban for journalists: report

FABIOLA SANCHEZ
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — The head of Venezuela's congress says he is asking courts to bar news executives from leaving the country while he's suing them for alleged defamation.

Those targeted include the head of El Nacional, the largest Venezuelan newspaper still consistently publishing articles critical of the government. National Assembly chief Diosdado Cabello said Wednesday he had followed through with his threat to sue the executives and their outlets for carrying reports in January from the Spanish newspaper ABC linking him to the drug trade. The reports said his bodyguard had defected to the U.S. to testify that Cabello heads a drug ring made up of politicians and high-level military officers. Cabello, who is the sec-

ond most powerful figure in Venezuela's ruling socialist party after President Nicolas Maduro, said he is pursuing both civil and criminal complaints, and is asking a court to take the executives' passports and freeze their assets.

He mocked the journalists on his national television show Wednesday for expressing dismay at the charges. "None of them have even said sorry. And now I'm the bad guy, who they accused of being a drug trafficker without any proof?" he said. "Who is going to defend my human rights?" Cabello has confirmed that his one-time bodyguard, Leamsy Salazar, defected to the U.S. last winter and may be cooperating in a prosecution that would name him as the head of a drug ring. But he denies any ties to trafficking. □



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Guyana:**Ex-army general expected to become new president****BERT WILKINSON****Associated Press****GEORGETOWN, Guyana**

(AP) — A retired army general is poised to become Guyana's new president after a multi-ethnic opposition coalition defeated a party that has been in power for nearly 25 years, officials said Thursday.

Preliminary results show David Arthur Granger and his Partnership for National Unity-Alliance for Change Coalition got nearly 207,000 votes in Monday's general elections. The long-governing People's Progressive Party had almost 201,500 votes, chief elections officer Keith Lowenfield said. The coalition is expected to have a three- or four-seat majority in the 65-member Parliament of the South American country. It previously held a one-seat majority and often clashed with the current president, Donald Ramotar, who forced early elections after suspending and dissolving Parliament to avoid a no-confidence vote.

Ramotar rejected the results and said his party is demanding a full recount. "I cannot concede that I have lost this election," he said. When asked if he would refuse to give up power, he answered, "I have not closed any option as yet." Guyana's electoral commission said final results expected late Thursday

would not differ much from the preliminary results released earlier in the day. The U.S. Embassy said allegations about irregularities were unfounded, calling the election "free and fair."

early Friday, becoming Guyana's eighth government leader since the country gained independence from Britain in 1966. He has promised to end racial politics that have long

Ramotar had defeated Granger and another coalition in 2011.

Granger is the son of a police officer and studied at a military school in Britain in the 1960s before returning



Presidential Candidate of the A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC) David Granger displays his inked finger after voting at the Enterprise Primary School Georgetown Guyana.

(AP Photo/Adrian Narine)

Ramotar's party has been in power since 1992 and was seeking a sixth consecutive term while facing accusations of corruption and mismanagement. It has long received support mostly from Guyanese of Indian descent.

Officials said the 69-year-old Granger could be sworn in late Thursday or

defined Guyana, a country of nearly 746,000 people who are mainly of Indian and African descent.

"The time has come for racial and national unity," Granger said ahead of the elections. "The time has come to end winner-take-all politics, corruption, nepotism and the squandering of our resources."

to serve in Guyana's army. He retired in the late 1980s as a one-star general and later served as a government security adviser. He is also a well-known historian. Granger will oversee a country whose economy relies heavily on the export of commodities including gold, sugar, bauxite and rice. □

Puerto Rico closes dozens of schools on economic woes**DANICA COTO****Associated Press****SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)**

— Francisco Oller Elementary School once bustled with kids, but now birds nest in classrooms strewn with leaves and glass from shattered fluorescent lights. Long-discarded homework assignments paper the ground. Graffiti covers the walls.

Located in a city just outside San Juan, the school is among more than 150 shuttered in the last five years as a worsening economic crisis has prompted hundreds of thousands of people to move to the U.S. mainland

over the past decade.

Driven by a combination of budget cuts and declining enrollment, the loss of so many schools is having a profound impact on communities in the U.S. island territory, forcing many children to commute to new campuses and creating a blight in places already hard-hit by recession.

The government says the situation could get much worse.

It warned just days ago that by early 2016 it may run out of money to pay its bills, and over the next five years it may have to close nearly 600 of the 1,460

public schools that once existed to save \$249 million a year. Currently, there are 1,387 schools across the island.

The trend "speaks volumes about how we're losing population, about how we're not being efficient in building the island's future, about how we're losing opportunities to create citizens," said San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz. "I'm extremely concerned this will increase the hopelessness and mistrust that the island has in itself and lead people to think that the only option to succeed and support their families is

to leave the island."

Puerto Rico has seen school enrollment drop 42 percent in the past three decades, and an additional 22 percent drop is expected over the next five years, according to a report by the Boston Consulting Group, which signed a multimillion-dollar deal with the government to help restructure the island's education system. Much of the drop is the result of parents moving to the mainland U.S. in search of better opportunities, including many teachers being recruited from the island for their bilingual skills. □

CARIBBEAN News Briefs**U.S. Virgin Islands official to prison on bribery, extortion**

CHARLOTTE AMALIE, U.S. Virgin Islands (AP) — A former official with the legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands has been sentenced to prison in a corruption case.

Louis "Lolo" Willis was sentenced Thursday to five years in prison by U.S. District Court Judge Curtis Gomez in St. Thomas. A jury convicted Willis of bribery and extortion in November.

Willis was executive director of the legislature from 2009-2012. The position gave him oversight over the renovation of the legislature's building. Federal prosecutors said he accepted bribes totaling at least \$13,000 to help contractors secure \$350,000 in work on the project.

The 57-year-old Willis denied wrongdoing. At his trial, his lawyer argued that he had approved contracts without the required review to complete the renovation more efficiently.

Haiti officials reject Sophia Martelly's bid for Senate seat**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**

— An elections committee in Haiti has rejected first lady Sophia Martelly's bid to run for Senate.

Electoral council spokesman Richardson Dumel said this week that the committee would not allow the wife of President Michel Martelly to pursue her candidacy. He did not provide details about the decision. Opposition officials had contested the first lady's eligibility for various reasons, including an argument that she holds dual U.S.-Haitian citizenship.

Martelly renounced her U.S. citizenship last year seeking to become eligible to run for a Senate district that includes the capital. □

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

PFTSA Hands Over Keys to First Homes in Jan Fleming



SANTA CRUZ - The Jan Fleming Housing Project, an initiative of the Pension Fund Tourism Sector, welcomed its first four home owners today as notary Ralph Yzaguirre conducted an informal document signing

ceremony, on site.

The ceremony was attended by Sanaa Baroud, PFTSA managing director and some of her board members Glenn Farro, Jossy Lacle, Ton Kolman, and contractor Carlos Dirks.



Families Boukhoudt-Padilla, Morisson, Tibata-Pimienta and Statie-Echeverry signed the deeds to their new homes, and enjoyed meeting their neighbors and getting to know their neighborhood, over flutes of chilled champagne and homemade snacks.

The housing project initiated by the pension fund includes eleven homes, offering five different designs. With zero down-payment and 100% financing, the project was designed to help members of the pension fund reach their goal of purchasing their own home.



The housing project, located in the heart of Santa Cruz, with superior infrastructure and modern home finishing, enjoys a very attractive financing plan, and on time, turn-key delivery.

The PFTSA was founded

shared the same vision for the need to create a pension plan which would provide workers in the tourism industry with additional income after retirement on top of the general old age pension provided by the government.



in 1992 as the initiative of the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association and the Federacion di Trahadornan di Aruba, as they both

Today, there are more than 115 member companies affiliated with PFTSA who together have more than 7,000 employees participating, and the number is growing every week.

The PFTSA, a not for profit fund, manages an investment portfolio of 55 million florins.

After the signing ceremony, Baroud informed press members that just four lots are left available at Jan Fleming project, and that members of the fund who wish to arrive at their own home are invited to apply for the opportunity.

For more information go to: www.pftsa.com. □



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Arion Wine Company Teams Up With the Hyatt Regency to Present California Nights!

--Join us for a unique culinary experience at the Palm Restaurant, May 20th, 2015

PALM BEACH - An opportune alignment of exceptional talent and good taste inspired the creation of a rare culinary event coming to the Hyatt Regency on May 20th, unfolding at the Palms Restaurant.

The event, a six course dinner, graced by culinary expertise, wine knowledge and service excellence, offers a limited number of tickets, available for sale through Mrs. Pinto, contact number 523-4574.

Inspired by Arion Wine Company representing Jackson Family Wines, the evening will be hosted by the winery's Master Sommelier Jennifer Huether, on her first visit to Aruba.

As Master Sommelier for the prestigious Jackson Family Wines, Jennifer will meet and greet all guests attending the exclusive gathering. She will be pouring the winery's top-of-the line wines, and pairing them with exquisite offerings conceived by award-winning executive chef Vincent Pellegrini and lovingly prepared his culinary brigade. The Brazilian-native chef infused many local elements into his cuisine, and promises



layered, complex and surprising food combinations. The wine pairing was expertly overseen by Govert v/d Hout, of Arion Wine Company.

The extravagant menu takes off with a Burrata Cheese appetizer paired with GalarieNaissance Sauvignon Blanc, 2013, Napa Valley, followed by a Duck Confit, escorted by the popular Byron Pinot Noir, 2012, Santa Maria Valley. Diners will delight in the Roasted Cigar Salmon, chased by Stonestreet Chardonnay, 2012, Sonoma Valley.

For Intermezzo, an exotic passion fruit sorbet with a splash of Arrowood Chardonnay, Sonoma Valley, will pave the way for the arrival of the main course, Seared Tenderloin with roasted garlic, shiitake mushroom

ragout, charcoal artichoke and porcini reduction, served with both Stonestreet Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 and the highly Robert Parker rated Cardinale, 2010, Napa Valley and encouraging the discussion of personal preferences among dinner guests.

The dessert featuring one of the chef's signature specialties Cream of Papaya, with blueberries, hibiscus Cabernet dressing and melt-in your mouth Pistachio Macaroons, will be enhanced by an exquisite golden elixir, Kendall-Jackson Late Harvest Chardonnay, 2007, Monterey County.

Canadian-born Huether,

the first and only female

Master Sommelier in Canada, recognized by the

Court of Master Sommeliers,

will provide ongoing com-

mentary sharing her deep



Jennifer Huether, Master Sommelier

knowledge of all things related to wine.

Chef Pellegrini whose passion for food, combined with his culinary expertise and welcoming personality, made him a household name in Aruba, is a champion of Hyatt Hotels & Resorts' global food philosophy, as he thoughtfully sources and carefully serves meals focused on healthy preparations, fit for royalty as he recently cooked all meals for his Royal Highness, King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, and his wife Queen Maxima, staying at the Hyatt Regency, on an official visit to the island.

Founded in 1982 by Jess

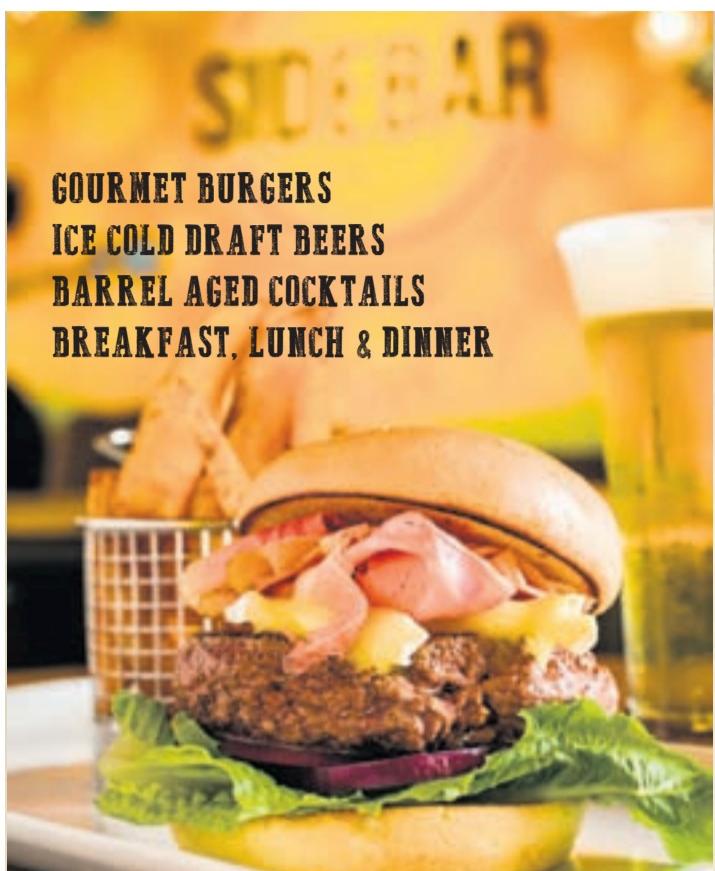
Jackson, the Jackson Family vineyards and wineries are first and foremost family-owned and operated, which was Jess Jackson's goal, when he entered the wine business three decades ago, wishing to create a family enterprise specializing in handmade wines of unmatched character.

Arion Wine Company is a local wine importing firm, offering great wines, teaching seminars, organizing tastings and educating those working in the hospitality sector. Arion Wine Company represents some of the world's most outstanding wineries in Aruba. □

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Your Side or mine? Just come inSide...

Sidebar, the newest restaurant on Aruba is about bourbon and burgers, and way more!

What's so special about Sidebar, you might ask? Well, for starters, the restaurant menu offers a great variety. Breakfast will wake you up, lunch will make you sparkle with its specials. By the time dinner comes along you will be ready for an extraordinary appetizer, a superb wrap, a spectacular gourmet burger, a freshly caught local fish, a great salad or a tender steak. The menu covers all the bases as well as the outfield, with the stress on quality. Sidebar's chef is a miracle working in the creativity department, so you can always ask him to surprise you with his specials. Please note the unusual presentation of the dishes you ordered: the wizard is at work.

Sidebar is the newest restaurant on Aruba, and oh boy, it is a beauty! Unique in a trendy, sassy and sexy way, it is ready to welcome all of you.



Common ground and denominating factor of the guests includes the enjoyment of life, in particular the good things, such as great bistro food, wonderful drinks and a relaxed, happy atmosphere. Sidebar is the name of a stylish, hip restaurant on the side of the Renaissance Marketplace; just hop inside, sit at the bar or on the amazing porch and enjoy – the party at Sidebar starts at 8 am and goes on until midnight.

At Sidebar you can sit in a booth, on a lounge chair, on a bar stool or stand at a cocktail table. Side Bar is all about options, so go and check it out on the far end corner of the Renaissance Marketplace.

Enjoy this new, hot, exciting and very, very tasty restaurant to the fullest!

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Renaissance Resort Appoints Augusto Riofrio Mapelli as New Chef of L.G. Smith Steak & Chop House

ORANJESTAD - Renaissance Aruba Resort and Casino has welcomed Chef Augusto Riofrio Mapelli as the new Chef of the resort's luxurious L.G. Smith Steak & Chop House restaurant. With ample experience in the culinary world through positions held at prestigious hotel restaurants that offer upscale dining experiences and a culinary style that aligns with Marriott's CookSmart Philosophy, Chef Riofrio provides a seamless transition into the Renaissance Aruba hospitality team.

In his new role as chef of L.G. Smith Steak & Chop House,

Chef Riofrio will spearhead the culinary team at the restaurant and produce quality dishes that showcase the restaurants specialties: prime steaks,



chops and seafood. With an ability to write strong menus and adapt offerings based on guest feedback, Chef Riofrio has already showcased his strong leadership skills both in the kitchen and front of the house. Born and raised in Peru, Chef Riofrio graduated

from the Institute of Gastronomy Cuisine D'Gallia in 2006, with an emphasis in pastry and baking, and holds more than 9 years of culinary experience. Chef Riofrio has served as executive chef at Bel-



mond Sanctuary Lodge at Machupicchu Cusco and Tambo del Inka luxury Collection Resort & Spa by Starwood Hotels, as well as chef at Mukul Resort & Spa Nicaragua, Casa Andina Private Collection Cusco and Casa Andina Private Collection Miraflores.

Overlooking the marina and bustling boulevard, L.G. Smith Steak & Chop House offers guests a signature fine dining experience with a menu that features fresh ingredients and seafood, certified Angus Beef and an extensive selection of international wines. □



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At a sunset reception at La Tratoria El Faro Blanco Restaurant; Romar Trading celebrates Castello Banfi's recent achievements

ORANJESTAD - Wine artist Clive Faustin and his crew at Romar Trading hosted an elegant sunset reception on the famous terrace of the restaurant below the California lighthouse celebrating two important awards, namely Castello Banfi's latest "Winery of the Year" title, and the full results' publication of Winemaker Challenge 2015, with Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino 2010 awarded Best of Class Italian and its San Angelo Pinot Grigio 2013 pronounced Best Of Class Pinot Grigio.

The local dignitaries gathered on the terrace for the event guided by Wine Artist Clive Faustin tasted five different Castello Banfi wines, impeccably paired with butler passed hors d'oeuvres prepared by the culinary brigade of La Tratoria El Faro Blanco Restaurant. The wines served at a perfect temperature at the tasting included Principe-sa Gavi, San Angelo Pinot Grigio, Rosso di Montalcino, Chianto and Brunello di Montalcino.

Family-owned Castello Banfi named Winery of the Year for Europe in the 2015 Winemaker Challenge, regularly participates in the



international competition organized by syndicated wine columnist Robert Whitley.

With its dedication to the pursuit of excellence through research and continuous improvement, Banfi

winery has intrinsically tied itself to the territory of Montalcino and now beyond to Strevi and Piedmont. When John F. Mariani, family proprietor and now Chairman Emeritus of Banfi, inaugurated Castello Banfi winery in 1984, he declared, "It is our fondest desire that this

project will be good for the people of Montalcino, good for Italy, good for America, good for all people who love fine wine."

True to the founder's words, Castello Banfi has become one of the world's most unique research plantations, with 25 years of clonal research, soil and hydration studies, nitrogen bottle pioneering, and research into French oak wine barrels. Findings from these studies have been generously shared with the wine-making community at large. Additionally, Castello Banfi is the first winery in the world to be awarded international recognition for exceptional environmental, ethical and social responsi-



bility as well as an international leader in customer satisfaction.

This commitment to improving the standards in the vineyard and at the winery has enabled Castello Banfi to produce world-class wines that deliver a consistent experience to consumers at exceptional values – from its Best in Class Italian at the Winemaker Challenge Brunello di Montalcino to its everyday value Gold Medal winner wine Centine

Working with their hands, thinking with their heart, Castello Banfi is dedicated to a finer wine world, and shared it with its Aruban wine aficionados. □



SPORTS**Aruba TODAY**

Atlanta Hawks' Al Horford hits a putback layup in the final seconds of Game 5 of the second round of the NBA basketball playoffs to beat the Washington Wizards 82-81 Wednesday, May 13, 2015, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

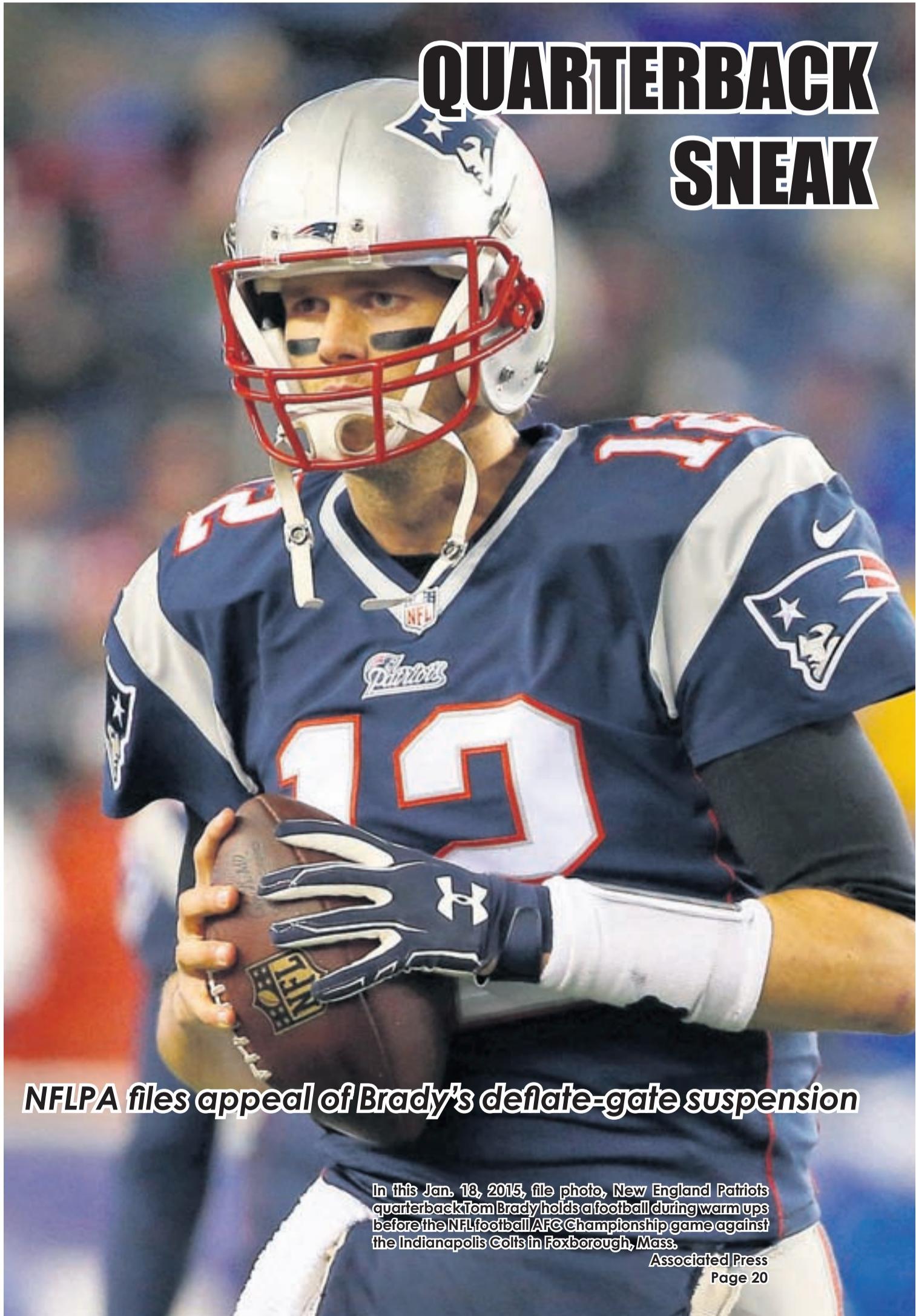
Horford's late follow gives Hawks win over Wizards

ATLANTA (AP) — Al Horford snatched away an offensive rebound and dropped in the winning basket with 1.9 seconds left after Dennis Schroder's drive to the basket was blocked by John Wall, giving the top-seeded Atlanta Hawks an 82-81 victory over the Washington Wizards on Wednesday night and a 3-2 lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Paul Pierce, who made a buzzer-beating winner in Game 3, appeared to have doomed the Hawks again when his 3-pointer from the corner gave the Wizards an 81-80 lead with 8.3 seconds left. Wall, playing for the first time since Game 1 after fracturing several bones in his left hand, fell to the court in celebration. Pierce taunted the Hawks bench and home crowd on his way back down the court.

Continued on Page 19

QUARTERBACK SNEAK



NFLPA files appeal of Brady's deflate-gate suspension

In this Jan. 18, 2015, file photo, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady holds a football during warm ups before the NFL football AFC Championship game against the Indianapolis Colts in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press
Page 20



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Robert Streb takes 1st-round lead in Wells Fargo

STEVE REED

AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) —

Phil Mickelson faded early and Rory McIlroy tailed off late. Robert Streb just kept on making birdies.

Streb shot a 7-under 65 on Thursday to take a one-shot lead over Patrick Reed and Kevin Chappell after the first round of the Wells Fargo Championship.

McIlroy appeared on the verge of a late run at the leaderboard before making a double bogey on the difficult par-3 17th hole. The world's top-ranked player appeared stunned when his tee shot hit the rock wall in front of the green and his ball caromed high into the air and into the water. He finished with a 70.

"One big mistake," McIlroy said.

McIlroy had just made par on the 16th hole by hitting a 9-iron pin high from 166 yards. He went with an 8-iron from 178 yards



Robert Streb hits from the rough on the fourth hole during the first round of the Wells Fargo Championship golf tournament at Quail Hollow Club in Charlotte, N.C., Thursday, May 14, 2015.

Associated Press

on No. 17, but it wound up not being enough to carry the water when his ball got held up in the wind.

Despite the error, McIlroy

said overall he was pleased with his round.

"I did what I wanted to," said McIlroy, who won the event in 2010 for his first

PGA Tour title. "I took advantage of the par 5s and made birdie on a couple of par 4s."

Mickelson had his troubles too after a fast start.

Lefty opened with three birdies, but had a double bogey on the 18th hole when his tee shot wound up in the creek on the left side of the fairway. He shot 71, leaving him six shots back.

Mickelson has long expressed his affinity for Quail Hollow, saying it is suits his game perfectly. Yet, he is winless in 11 tries, although he has come close with five top-5 finishes.

He got things off to a rousing start, sinking birdie putts from 6, 9 and 12 feet to start the back nine, drawing roars from a crowd. But the putts wouldn't fall for Mickelson after his initial burst.

"I turned a 66 into a 71 today," Mickelson said.

Mickelson, who missed the cut last week at The Players Championship, insists

his game "isn't that far off." "Fortunately, I didn't shoot myself out of the tournament," he said.

While Mickelson faded after his strong start, Streb didn't.

After tying for 30th at The Players, Streb set the early pace with two quick birdies on the back nine and played a bogey-free round.

His 65 was the second-best opening round score of his brief PGA Tour career. He found his putting stroke last week at TPC Sawgrass and it was right there again at Quail Hollow.

"It's the first time in a while I feel like I have my putter working," Streb said.

It didn't hurt that he caught a few breaks along the way.

On the par-5 seventh hole, Streb hit a pitch shot from 10 feet off the green too hard, but the ball hit midway up the flagstick and dropped 4 feet from the hole, leading to an easy birdie.

"I smashed the flag," Streb said with a sheepish grin.

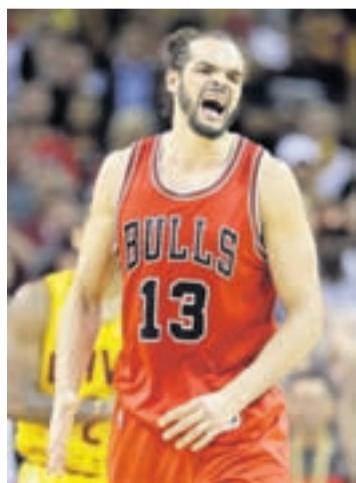
While many of the fans were heading for the parking lot to call it a day, Chappell turned in a strong finish with an eagle on the par-5 seventh and a birdie on the eighth to move into a tie with Reed for second place.

Reed spent time tied for the lead, but couldn't maintain it after failing to save par on No. 17 when his tee shot landed in the sand.

Stewart Cink topped the six-player group at 67.

Defending tournament champion J.B. Holmes put himself in position to become the first repeat winner in the tournament's 13-year history by opening with a 69. □

Bulls' Noah earns J. Walter Kennedy Award for citizenship



Chicago Bulls center Joakim Noah reacts during the second half against the Cleveland Cavaliers in Game 5 in a second-round NBA basketball playoff series Tuesday, May 12, 2015, in Cleveland.

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago Bulls center Joakim Noah won the J. Walter Kennedy Award, given annually to an NBA player, coach, or trainer for community service.

The two-time All-Star was selected by the Pro Basketball Writers Association for his work with youth. His Noah's Arc Foundation recently launched the "Rock Your Drop: The Drop of Consciousness" anti-violence initiative, supporting those impacted by violence, and encouraging youngsters to express themselves through sports and art.

I'm proud of everybody

who's helped bring positive (things) to Chicago, helped the kids," Noah said. "My group has put in a lot of work to help. We still have a long ways to go."

The foundation recently produced a video featuring those who lost loved ones. Teammates Derrick Rose and Taj Gibson have contributed to the project. Last summer, Noah hosted a basketball tournament for young men from Chicago's south and west sides. Orlando's Tobias Harris, Detroit's Greg Monroe, Los Angeles Clippers' Chris Paul, and Memphis' Zach Randolph were finalists for the award. □

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NBA CAPSULES

Continued from Page 17

But Atlanta had one more chance.

But Horford snatched the ball away from Nene, who tumbled to the court. Uncontested, the Hawks center put in the winner.

WARRIORS 98, GRIZZLIES 78
OAKLAND, California (AP) — Stephen Curry turned in an MVP-worthy performance, Klay Thompson snapped out of his shooting funk and Golden State rolled past Memphis to take a 3-2 lead in their Western Conference semifinal series.

Curry scored 18 points on six 3-pointers and added a career-playoff high six steals to go with seven rebounds and five assists. Thompson scored 21 points, and Harrison Barnes had 14 as the Warriors won their second straight game in impressive fashion. □



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry, right, dribbles against Memphis Grizzlies forward Zach Randolph during the second half of Game 5 in a second-round NBA playoff basketball series in Oakland, Calif., Wednesday, May 13, 2015.

Associated Press

Tom Brady appeals suspension in 'Deflategate'

HOWARD ULMAN

JIMMY GOLEN

AP Sports Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Massachusetts (AP) — Tom Brady appealed his four-game suspension for his role in using deflated footballs in the NFL playoffs, and the players union urged Commissioner Roger Goodell on Thursday to appoint a neutral arbitrator to hear the case.

The expected appeal was filed by the NFL Players Association about an hour before the deadline. The league's collective bargaining agreement stipulates that it will be decided by Goodell or a person he designates. But the players union said in a news release that "given the NFL's history of inconsistency and arbitrary decisions in disciplinary matters, it is only fair that a neutral arbitrator hear this appeal."

The union did not detail the basis for the appeal. But in a 20,000-word rebuttal posted online by the Patriots' lawyers earlier Thursday, the team disputed the conclusions on matters of science, logic, and law.

Attorney Daniel Goldberg's response claims the league's conclusions are "at best, incomplete, incorrect and lack context," claiming as one example that the "deflator" nickname used by a ballboy and cited in the discipline was about weight loss, not footballs.

Goldberg represented the



In this Feb. 1, 2015, file photo, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) warms up before the NFL Super Bowl XLIX football game against the Seattle Seahawks in Glendale, Ariz.

Associated Press

team and was present during all of the interviews of team personnel. Patriots spokesman Stacey James confirmed that the website wellsreportcontext.com was genuine, and "approved/supported by the team."

The NFL suspended the quarterback for four games on Monday, also fining the defending Super Bowl champions \$1 million and taking away two draft picks.

Brady's appeal deals only with the suspension and must be heard within 10

days. The team has not said if it will appeal its penalties, which include a first-round draft pick next year and a fourth-rounder in 2017, before a May 21 deadline. League-appointed investigator Ted Wells found that Brady was "at least generally aware" of plans by two team employees to prepare the balls to his liking, below the league-mandated minimum of pounds per square inch. But the team's rebuttal presented its own science that would explain the loss of pressure in a more innocuous way.

"The most fundamental issue in this matter is: DOES SCIENCE EXPLAIN THE LOSS OF PSI IN THE PATRIOTS FOOTBALLS?" attorney Daniel L. Goldberg wrote before concluding, also in all capital letters, that it does. The rebuttal also alludes to other incidents of ball-tampering that were not dealt with as harshly. And it says increased communication between Brady and the ballboys after the scandal broke were just normal expressions of concern, rather

than evidence of the quarterback's guilt.

Here are some more of the claims and counter-claims in the Wells report and the Patriots' rebuttal:

THE DEFULATOR

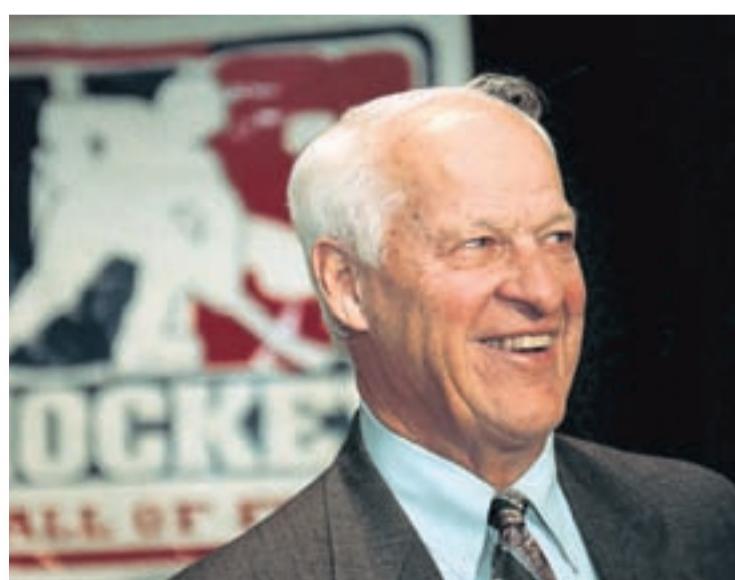
The NFL says: Texts in which McNally refers to himself as "the deflator" are an indication that he was taking air out of footballs after they were inspected by the referees. His texts with equipment assistant John Jastremski also include a reference to providing him with a needle.

The team says: McNally used the term "deflator" to refer to his desire to lose weight, as in the text, "deflate and give somebody that jacket." And the needle was necessary because McNally was sometimes responsible for getting an inflation needle to referees for pregame testing.

THE SCIENCE

The NFL says: The footballs provided by the Patriots lost more air pressure between the pregame test and halftime than could be explained by non-nefarious reasons.

The team says: The league cherry-picked readings from two different gauges to create the biggest gap between pregame and halftime measurements. That overshadowed a difference in air pressure in some of the balls that could be explained by atmospheric conditions. □



In this Nov. 1, 2000, file photo, hockey legend Gordie Howe speaks to the media before the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame's 27th Annual Enshrinement Dinner at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, Minn.

Associated Press

Planned US-Canada bridge to be named after Gordie Howe

DETROIT (AP) — A planned \$2.1 billion bridge connecting Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, will be named after ice hockey great Gordie Howe.

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper made the announcement on Thursday in Windsor. The 87-year-old Howe, known as "Mr. Hockey," was born in Canada, and led the Detroit Red Wings to four Stanley Cup championships in the 1950s. Snyder said it was an easy,

mutual decision.

"If you really think about it, who better represents the two countries and the bond between us in terms of being a legend in Detroit and Michigan and in Canada?" the governor said. The yet-to-be built Gordie Howe International Bridge is expected to be operational in 2020. Authorities want to build the bridge to alleviate congestion along the privately owned Ambassador Bridge, and the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel, which is too tight for trucks.

Owners of the Ambassador Bridge, which is just north of the proposed new bridge, oppose the plan and are pushing to instead add a span to the current bridge. But local officials argue that the heavy traffic is impeding trade.

Howe is undergoing treatment after suffering a serious stroke. His son, Murray Howe, said his father was pleased when told of the naming decision. "That sounds pretty good to me," he quoted his father as saying. □

Rangers advance in OT on Stepan goal, 2-1 over Caps



The puck, shot by New York Rangers center Derek Stepan (21) gets past Washington Capitals goalie Braden Holtby (70) for the winning goal in overtime of Game 7 of the Eastern Conference semifinals during the NHL hockey Stanley Cup playoffs, Wednesday, May 13, 2015, in New York.

Associated Press

BARRY WILNER
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) The New York Rangers earned a place in the NHL Eastern Conference finals when Derek Stepan scored in overtime to secure a 2-1 win over Washington on Wednesday and a third successive victory to snatch the best-of-seven series 4-3. Stepan's wrist shot from the left wing after he won a faceoff capped the comeback both on the night and in the series. "We have a good group that keeps their wits about them and keeps calm," said Stepan, who was mobbed by his teammates along the glass as Madison Square Garden shook from the cheers. "There is no real panic. We just see what happens and we just play hockey."

The Rangers are the only team to win a series after trailing 3-1 in successive years, having done the same thing to Pittsburgh in the second round in 2014. "It's a very special win," said goaltender Henrik Lundqvist, who made 35 saves and became the third goalie to win six Game 7s, joining Patrick Roy and Martin Brodeur. New York, which had the NHL's best record this sea-

son, will face Tampa Bay for a spot in the Stanley Cup finals, where the Rangers lost to Los Angeles last spring. The series begins Saturday at the Garden. Alex Ovechkin scored in the first period for Washington, which has lost five Game 7s in as many tries when leading a series 3-1. Kevin Hayes tied it for the Rangers in the second. Although the Rangers were badly outplayed early in overtime, Lundqvist stood tall with eight saves as the Capitals couldn't find that winning touch. That's something the Rangers seem to own in Game 7s; New York has won six in a row, including the past three series against Washington.

"It's hard to really explain," said Dan Girardi, whose shot from the point led to Stepan's winner. "We were down and it looked like we were down and out, and we found a way to crawl back in this series and win one game at a time. We knew coming into this barn in Game 7 anything could happen and it went down to the wire."

It was the Rangers' fourth overtime win in as many tries this year, all by 2-1 scores. It was a cruel finish for Capitals goalie Braden

Holtby, who was superb all series and made 37 saves Wednesday.

"Great series. It was fun to be a part of, obviously not fun to be on the losing side," Holtby said. "We left it all out there. I don't think there was one guy who wasn't committed. That's life sometimes." Washington was quicker to the puck than the generally faster Rangers in the first period, when Lundqvist was much busier than Holtby, making 14 saves. The difference through 20 minutes was that Washington's top goal scorer connected on his best chance while New York's didn't.

Ovechkin, who scored 53 times to lead the league, somehow got wide open in the slot after the Capitals won a faceoff and worked the puck off the boards. His wrist shot beat Lundqvist to the glove side.

Late in the period, the Rangers' Rick Nash, who trailed Ovechkin by 11 goals during the season, got free on a breakaway. He tried to deke Holtby and go through the legs, but his backhander was stopped as the fans lamented a missed opportunity. The Rangers' power play tied it in the second period.

Tireless defenseman Ryan McDonagh, who played 29 minutes kept in a clearing attempt at the right point

and passed to J.T. Miller. His cross-ice feed to a cutting Hayes was perfect and Hayes put it past Holtby. □



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SAT 3:10 | 5:45 | 8:20 | 10:55
SUN & HOL 3:10 | 5:45 | 8:20 | 10:55
2D VERSION
MON-THURS 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30
FRI 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30 | 12:05
SAT 1:50 | 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30 | 12:05
SUN & HOL 1:50 | 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30



PITCH PERFECT 2

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SAT 1:50 | 4:15 | 6:45 | 9:15 | 11:30
SUN & HOL 1:50 | 4:15 | 6:45 | 9:15



LOS PARACASIDISTAS

SPANISH
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SAT 2:30 | 4:45 | 7:00 | 9:15 | 11:30
SUN & HOL 2:30 | 4:45 | 7:00 | 9:15



AVENGERS
AGE OF ULTRON

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3D VERSION
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SUN & HOL 2:00 | 5:00 | 8:05
2D VERSION
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HEATHER SOSSAMAN | MATTHEW BOHRER

UNFRIENDED

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SUN & HOL 3:35 | 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35

PAUL BLART MALL COP 2

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
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FRI 4:40 | 6:50 | 9:10 | 11:20
SAT 2:30 | 4:40 | 6:50 | 9:10 | 11:20
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Djokovic tested by Bellucci; Murray and Serena withdraw

ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

ROME (AP) — Top-ranked Novak Djokovic fought back from a set down to pull out a 5-7, 6-2, 6-3 win over Brazilian qualifier Thomaz Bellucci to reach the Italian Open quarterfinals on Thursday.

The 68th-ranked Bellucci gave Djokovic trouble with his powerful serving and groundstrokes and also exhibited extraordinary foot speed early on.

After Bellucci broke to take a 6-5 lead in the opening set, Djokovic put on a new pair of sneakers during the changeover — a sign he wasn't comfortable.

Djokovic broke early in the second set and got the decisive break late in the third, extending his winning streak to 18 matches.

He will next face fifth-seeded Kei Nishikori, who beat Viktor Troicki of Serbia 6-4, 6-3.

Earlier, Rafael Nadal became the first player to

break John Isner's serve in nearly a month, and he did it twice in a 6-4, 6-4 win. Andy Murray and Serena Williams, meanwhile, withdrew from the last big warm-up tournament before the French Open, which starts in 10 days.

Murray cited fatigue following consecutive clay titles in Munich and Madrid, while Williams said she has a right elbow injury.

Isner held serve in 84 consecutive games stretching back to his last meeting with Nadal on April 16 in the Monte Carlo Masters, when Nadal broke him in the third set and went on to win. This time, Nadal broke to take a 3-2 lead in the first set with a forehand winner that landed on the line on his first break point.

Then the Spaniard produced a whipping forehand return pass up the line off Isner's second serve to go up 5-4 in the second, and quickly closed it out from there.

"When I had chances I



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, returns the ball to Thomaz Bellucci, of Brazil, during their match at the Italian Open tennis tournament, in Rome, Thursday, May 14, 2015.

Associated Press

(took advantage)," Nadal said. "My serve was perfect the whole match. I played with (few) mistakes."

Nadal will next face eighth-seeded Stan Wawrinka, who beat Dominic Thiem of Austria 7-6 (3), 6-4.

Roger Federer struggled only to close out a 6-3, 7-5 win over big-serving South African Kevin Anderson. Anderson served 14 aces to Federer's four, and matched the 17-time Grand Slam champion with

22 winners, but never really put Federer under pressure. Federer lined up sixth-seeded Tomas Berdych, who overcame a strong challenge and a partisan crowd for a 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (2) win over Fabio Fognini, the last remaining Italian. Amid a raucous atmosphere on a secondary court, the match lasted more than 2 1/2 hours. Also through was seventh-seeded David Ferrer, who defeated Guillermo Gar-

cia-Lopez 6-1, 6-3. Ferrer's quarterfinal opponent will be David Goffin of Belgium, who advanced when Murray pulled out.

In women's action, second-seeded Simona Halep routed 1999 Rome champion Venus Williams 6-2, 6-1; two-time champ Maria Sharapova eliminated Serbian qualifier Bojana Jovanovski 6-3, 6-3; and Carla Suarez Navarro defeated Eugenie Bouchard 6-7 (2), 7-5, 7-6 (7). □

Giro leader Contador dislocates shoulder in stage 6 crash

CASTIGLIONE DELLA PESCAIA, Italy (AP) — Overall leader Alberto Contador was "optimistic" he will continue riding in the Giro d'Italia despite dislocating his shoulder in a crash on the final sprint of the sixth stage on Thursday.

Contador was able to get up and finish the stage but was unable to lift his left arm on the podium to put on the pink jersey, and did not pick up the celebratory bottle of champagne — a sharp contrast to the previous day when he sprayed it cheerfully around after claiming the overall lead.

The Spaniard's attempt to become the first rider since Marco Pantani in 1998 to win the Giro and the Tour de France in the same year could be over in under a week.

He underwent 30 minutes of tests — including X-rays and an echography — his



Spain's Alberto Contador stands on podium after the sixth leg of the Giro d'Italia, Tour of Italy cycling race from Montecatini Terme to Castiglione della Pescaia, Italy, Thursday, May 14, 2015.

Associated Press

Tinkoff-Saxo team said, and his condition will be reevaluated in the morning.

"The doctors have recommended that I immobilize my left arm during the evening and night, while I try to move it a bit with the help

of my other arm to promote the movement of the shoulder," Contador said. "I will focus on this until tomorrow before the stage, where the doctors will come back to put on a layer of bandage for the race."

"I will try to start tomorrow on stage 7, as I have worked very hard ahead of the Giro. I will try to continue until the very last moment.

I'm optimistic about the start tomorrow, but we have to wait until right before the start to see what happens, and how serious the effect of the crash is." The crash occurred in the final 300 meters as Daniele Colli hit the camera lens of a spectator leaning over the barrier and went down, bringing half the peloton down with him. Colli was immediately taken to a hospital and his team confirmed he broke his arm.

Contador and the other riders involved did not lose any time as it happened in the final three kilometers. He maintained a two-second lead over Italian title hopeful Fabio Aru, and a 20-second advantage over

third-place Richie Porte. Andre Greipel won the bunch sprint at the end of the 183-kilometer (114-mile) leg from Montecatini Terme to Castiglione Della Pescaia.

The German was perfectly led out by Lotto Souda teammate Greg Henderson, and he had enough power to beat Matteo Pelucchi by a bike length. Sacha Modolo was third.

"We (the team) have been working so long together and we are friends, which makes it easier to fight for each other and for the victories," said Greipel, who finished third in the second stage after opening his sprint too early. "Everyone went for it today and deserved victory."

"The whole team did a great job from kilometer zero, and the last 3K went how we planned it on the bus this morning. □



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Twitter founder feeling 'Super' as he heads in new direction

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Biz Stone knows abandoning a struggling project to try something else can be a smart move. After all, he was part of a team that dumped the seldom-heard podcasting service Odeo nearly a decade ago to work on a new idea called Twitter that transformed how people communicate and made him a multimillionaire.

Stone is hoping his latest change in direction pays off as he heads down a new path at Jelly Industries, a San Francisco startup he launched shortly after leaving Twitter three years ago. Jelly made headlines 16 months ago with the release of mobile app that taps into social networks to find experts who can answer questions that stump Internet search engines. Within a few months, Stone and Jelly co-founder Ben Finkel realized the question-and-answer format wasn't catching on so they came up with a different app called Super for sharing opinions.

Super's name reflects how Stone feels about the app about five months after it was released.

"We know in our guts that this has legs, just as we knew in our guts that it was time to stop working on Jelly," Stone says.

Super is trying to broaden its appeal with an app update available Wednesday. The new features will enable users to select and post the faces of other people who have set up profiles on the service. After "facetagging" people, their images mingle with the selection of emojis and



In this Jan. 7 2015 photo, Twitter co-founder Biz Stone speaks on stage at National Geographic Channel 2015 Winter TCA in Pasadena, Calif.

Associated Press

large, colorful text that Super provides for its users to create emphatic messages declaring their passions and peeves.

The goal is to infuse Super with a fun-loving vibe that was notably missing from the more scholarly Jelly app.

"Super is more about expressing yourself with an emotional bent," Stone says. "Unfortunately, Jelly was too much like doing homework. People literally did their homework on it. It just wasn't the business we wanted to be in."

Stone, 41, knows many people think Super is stupid. The derision only reinforces his conviction that he is on the right track because he remembers people mocking Twitter in its early days too.

"Something has to be fun to use before it can become important," he says. "Look at Snapchat, Twitter and Facebook. They all started out to be fun at first, now they are important. If

'Minecraft' most streamed video game in YouTube's history

DERRIK J. LANG

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Minecraft" has built a big reputation on YouTube.

The video streaming service announced Wednesday that content featuring the virtual brick-building video game has been watched more than any other interactive title in the 10 years since YouTube launched.

"There are over 42 million 'Minecraft' videos on YouTube today," said Ryan Wyatt, YouTube's global head of gaming content. "It's crazy because 'Minecraft' is also the second most searched term on YouTube. It's a testament to (publisher) Mojang understanding the marketing capacity and power of our content creators."

The blocky indie game was originally released by Swedish studio Mojang and



In this June 13, 2013 file photo, Jonny Rice wears a Minecraft-themed mask while promoting a video clip he created during the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

creator Markus "Notch" Persson more than five years ago and has gone on to become a cultural phenomenon spawning books, toys and other merchandise. The franchise's popularity prompted Microsoft to buy "Minecraft" for \$2.5 billion in 2014. "Minecraft" videos on YouTube range from crafters

showing off their digital creations to virtual explorers traversing the game's procedurally generated landscape.

In honor of the streaming video site's 10th anniversary, YouTube released a list of the top 10 most popular games that have been streamed since the site debuted in 2005. □

Officials: Avon claims received no takeover offers

MARLEY JAY
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Avon said it had received no takeover offers Thursday after a purported \$8 billion bid for the company filed with federal regulators led to three halts in the trading of its shares.

It said it can't confirm that the company, calling itself PTG Capital Partners, exists. Calls to the company, which claimed London as its headquarters in the filing, went unanswered.

Shares of Avon were halted several times due to volatility after the filing appeared on the website used by the Securities and Exchange Commission, a trusted source for investors. An entity calling itself PTG said that it had submitted a bid of \$18.75 per share to the board at Avon. That was almost triple the stock's closing price on Wednesday, an enormous premium. The filing contained numerous typos, however, including varied spellings of

the company's own name. That the filing appeared on the website used by the SEC immediately raised questions about the vulnerability of platforms relied upon by investors globally. Jordan Thomas, a former lawyer at the SEC, said that a bogus filing with the commission intended to push up the value of a stock would be brazen act, much like using unwitting police officers to pull off a heist. "It's not some bogus blog post that's gone through

15 different countries and servers," said Thomas, now a partner at Labaton Sucharow. "Any time you put out false information in the marketplace, you leave a trail that can be followed by law enforcement. This trail goes right through the SEC." The SEC would not comment Thursday. A bid for a struggling Avon would not be surprising and it has happened in recent years, lending more credence to the bid initially.

The company has reported three straight years of losses and declining revenue. It has eliminated jobs and taken other actions to cut costs.

In December, Avon agreed to pay \$135 million to settle criminal and civil charges after its China unit pleaded guilty to conspiring to violate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act by bribing officials there.

Still, the filing that contained the bid raised red flags almost immediately. □

Wall Street ends higher, breaking three-day slump



Traders use their handheld devices as they work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. U.S. stocks rebounded Thursday, snapping a three-day losing streak for the Dow Jones industrial average and the Standard & Poor's 500 index.

ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

U.S. stocks rebounded Thursday, snapping a three-day losing streak for the Dow Jones industrial

average and the Standard & Poor's 500 index. Encouraging data on the U.S. job market and inflation helped lift the market, pushing the S&P 500 to a re-

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

cord high. The Dow came within 36 points of its own record. The indexes are up for the month and year. Technology and consumer staples stocks were among

the biggest gainers. The price of U.S. oil fell on continuing concerns about high global supplies. The Dow rose 191.75 points, or 1.1 percent, to 18,252.24. The S&P 500 index gained 22.62 points, or 1.1 percent, to 2,121.10. That's three points higher than its previous closing high of 2,117.69 on April 24.

The Nasdaq composite added 69.10 points, or 1.4 percent, to 5,050.80.

The 10 sectors in the S&P 500 closed higher, with technology stocks leading the pack. The sector is up 4.8 percent this year.

"We've been at roughly this level of the S&P for almost three months," said David Lefkowitz, senior equity strategist at UBS Wealth Management Americas. "We're up 1 percent today and that's a decent move."

After a mostly downbeat week in the markets, trading got off to a strong start early Thursday as investors weighed the two Labor Department reports.

The government said fewer people applied for unemployment aid last week, pushing the four-week average down to its lowest level since April 2000. Unemployment benefit applications are a proxy for layoffs, so the very low level is evidence that Americans are enjoying more job security. It is also a sign employers are confident enough in the economy to hold on to their employees, despite signs of sluggish growth. A separate index that tracks the prices of goods and services before they reach consumers declined 0.4 percent last month. □

Retailers struggling to deal with myriad of issues

MICHELLE CHAPMAN
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — While investors may be unnerved by the broad sell-off in the retail sector Thursday, a closer look at the industry shows it may merely be contending with issues it's dealt with for quite some time. A range of retail shares, including Kohl's Corp., J.C. Penney Co. and Target Corp., are falling as most other markets were posting gains. The sell-off comes a day after the Commerce Department reported that retail sales were unchanged in

April after rising 1.1 percent in March. But sales have edged up 0.9 percent over the past year amid numerous factors weighing on the sector. Brian Sozzi, CEO and chief equities strategist at Belus Capital Advisors, says that the recent financial results from Kohl's, J.C. Penney and Macy's Inc. — which all had softer-than-expected revenue — suggests consumers will need attractive deals in the spring and summer to push them to make purchases. The executive also said retailers' profits have been weighed down by the de-

cision by many companies to reinvest in their businesses, whether that be new stores, new technology or something else.

Burt Flickinger III, a managing director with Strategic Resource Group, doesn't view Thursday's sell-off as a reason to be concerned, calling it an overreaction. He thinks shoppers' spending was impacted by several factors, such as tax refund delays due to short staffing at the Internal Revenue Service. Flickinger believes that when consumers receive their refunds it will allow them to spend on

clothing and other retail goods in the second and third quarters.

The executive said that other issues include the West Coast port dispute — which led to delays in merchandise arrivals — and harsh winter storms that brought about expensive home repairs and high electric bills for some consumers.

Flickinger said that the savings people were getting from lower gasoline prices wound up going toward those repairs and bills, but once those matters are resolved consumers will be able to use their gas sav-

ings for retail spending. Luckily consumers can likely anticipate gas savings for some time, with the Energy Department announcing on Tuesday that it expects the price of gasoline to average \$2.55 between April and September, which would be the lowest since 2009. In afternoon trading, Kohl's shares dropped \$8.95, or 12 percent, to \$65.56. Target shares were down \$2.89, or 3.6 percent, to \$76.92; J.C. Penney shares lost 46 cents, or 5.3 percent, to \$8.25 and Macy's Inc. shares slipped 13 cents to \$63.60. □

The Suicide of Britain



ROSS DOUTHAT

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For much of European history, empire was the normal political arrangement: Large, polyglot, multiethnic and eventually multireligious, with a monarch on top and a jostling confederation underneath.

Then came modernity, democracy and nationalism, and the "nations" of Europe - half-real, half-invented - demanded self-determination and self-rule.

Between 1914 and 1945 (with a final act in the Balkans in the 1990s), this led to world-historical disaster, mass exterminations, ruthless wars for mastery. But out of those conflicts came a new kind of hybrid order. The nations would have self-rule, within borders redrawn by war and ethnic cleansing. But they would be supervised by a kind of postmodern empire, an imperial bureaucracy without the emperor - the European Union.

The outlier, as always, was Great Britain. Like its rivals, the United Kingdom lost its overseas colonies, but it kept much of its domestic empire, the several nations - English, Scottish, Welsh and Ulster Irish - that still share a flag and crown. And as befits its anachronistic status, Britain has held itself somewhat aloof from the European Union's postmodern imperium, joining the union but not its common currency.

These distinctive arrangements have been good for the U.K. overall. Remaining a united kingdom has magnified its global clout, and being in the EU, but not fully of it, has spared it the worst of the continent's Euro-driven woes.

But neither arrangement may last much longer. In the headlines, last week's British elections were a big victory for David Cameron's Conservatives. But the deep winners were the forces of nationalism, Scottish and English, which suddenly have the United Kingdom as we know it on the ropes.

The Scottish story is the more remarkable one, since a decade ago Scottish independence still seemed a crank's hobby, and after losing last year's referendum on independence it was assumed that the nationalists had shot their bolt.

Instead, the referendum campaign seems to have affected Scottish politics more than its technical outcome. As Alex Massie, a pro-union Scottish writer, put it last week, in Scotland, "Nationalism is our new secular religion," and the politics of identity suddenly "defeats all comers." All but three, as it turned out: In Thursday's vote, the nationalists took 56 out of 59 parliamentary seats in Scotland, effectively turning the

heathered north into a single-party state.

What the Scottish nationalists ultimately want is to trade the Union Jack for the EU's postmodern bargain: ethnically rooted self-government under a distant supranational umbrella, rather than a political union that can back wars or budget cuts that most Scots oppose. Not every Scot who voted nationalist last week is ready to support this vision. But the pull of union is clearly weakening in the north. Meanwhile to the south, a more English sort of nationalism wants out of the European Union completely, and suspects the Scots are getting too sweet a deal within the U.K. as it is. This is the spirit at work in UKIP, the populist, antiglobalist party that's taking votes from both left and right, and in the Tory base as well.

The two nationalisms, north and south, can feed on one another. However reluctantly, Cameron's government will have to give "little Englander" sentiment its due. (He's promised a referendum on Britain's EU membership for 2017). This will confirm the Scottish nationalists in their alienation, their desire to rule themselves alone.

On paper, the arguments against both disunion and a "Brexit" from the EU remain potent. The Scots really do reap significant benefits from union, and the nationalist vision of Scotland as a kilted Norway, oil-rich and social-democratic, is unlikely to survive contact with the realities of independence. Abandoning Britain's "this far, no further" approach to Europe and leaving the EU outright, meanwhile, would cede economic and political influence (to France, most likely) for uncertain gains.

But these are practical arguments, and sometimes politics needs something more. The nationalists of Scotland and England, in different ways, offer a vision of political community as an object of belief, an end unto itself. Against that kind of message, it's not enough to defend the present order bloodlessly, to say, "Yes, it's anachronistic to have a miniature empire in this day and age, but really the net benefits make it worth keeping." Instead, you have to argue explicitly for a GREAT Britain. You have to invoke the United Kingdom's world-bestriding past, which the Scots no less than the English sustained and died defending, with something more than awkward embarrassment. You have to make a case to the Little Englanders that Britain's multicultural, Europe-facing present can keep faith with that past and not just bury it. You have to demonstrate that a liberal empire, no less than an ethnic homeland, can be something real and rooted - something felt in "the blood and guts," as Massie put it during the Scottish referendum, "the bone and marrow of our lives."

I'm a Yankee; this not my argument to make. But if our cousins can't find leaders who can make it, there won't be a Great Britain anymore. □



Mothers and Presidents



DAVID BROOKS

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Americans are embarrassed. Over the last 35 years there have only been two elections without a Bush or Clinton on the national ticket. Next year both names could rest atop the ballot. In one poll voters saw this as a bad thing by a ratio of 8 to 1. Some of the people who are upset have a false view of how life works. Since Thomas Hobbes, many people have embraced the illusory notion that society is made up of individuals. According to this view the only fair competition is between individuals, without undue benefit from family connections.

But no society has ever been this way. Individuals don't come fully formed. They emerge out of families and groups. The family and group is the essential social unit. These collectives have always shaped public life.

According to some surveys, 90 percent of businesses around the world are family-operated businesses. Much research suggests that in the U.S., family-run businesses outperform non-family-run businesses, especially while the founder is still alive.

Politics, too, has always been a dynastic affair. If Hillary Clinton wins the presidency, then 10 of the 45 presidents will have had a family member precede or follow them in the White House. According to my colleagues at

The Times, among boomers, the son of a senator was 8,500 times more likely to become a senator than the average American male.

Things look the same on the state level. In New York there are Cuomos. In California, Browns. Out West the joke is that voters should just vote for the closest Udall.

If you look around the globe, these pseudo-monarchical tendencies seem to be on the increase, not on the decrease. There are Aquinos in the Philippines, Nehru-Gandhis in India, even Le Pens in France. Now that women are more empowered, each dominant clan has essentially doubled the size of its talent pool, so family influence is increased.

Why do the members of dynastic families do so well? Some of the reasons are obvious and unfair: brand names and fundraising networks. Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton get the benefit of their family members' fame. Their donor networks are already in place. These advantages will not necessarily make them better presidents.

But in other ways we should be grateful that in each field of endeavor there are certain families that are breeding grounds for achievement. We should be grateful that there are Bachs in music, Griffeyes and Molinas in baseball, Brontes and Amises in novel writing and Kennedys, Roosevelts, Clintons and Bushes in politics. These families make life more unfair for the rest of us (because it's harder for others to compete against them), but they also make society as a whole more accomplished.

Powerhouse families nurture achievement in many ways. First, there's identity formation. If you grow up in a musical family you're more likely to think of yourself as a musician at a young age. You can get your 10,000 hours of practice in early, which is a huge leg up. According to my colleagues at

Second, there is the realm of practical knowledge. Very little of the knowledge you need to succeed in a trade can be taught in the classroom or read about in a book. It can only be imparted by example. If you're a Nancy Kassebaum and you grow up around your dad, Alf Landon, as he conducts a meeting, works a room or reacts to victory or defeat, you're more likely to have an intuitive feel for how the craft of politics is done.

Third, there is the level of skills. The philosopher Michael Oakeshott once observed that it takes three generations to make a career. That is, the skills that going into, say, a teacher - verbal fluency, empathy, endurance - take a long time to develop. They emerge in grandparents and great-grandparents and are passed down magnified through the generations. I bet you can trace ways your grandparents helped shape your career.

Fourth, there is audacity. It is very odd to think you should be president of the United States. But if you grow up in the Kennedy or Bush families it is apparently less odd.

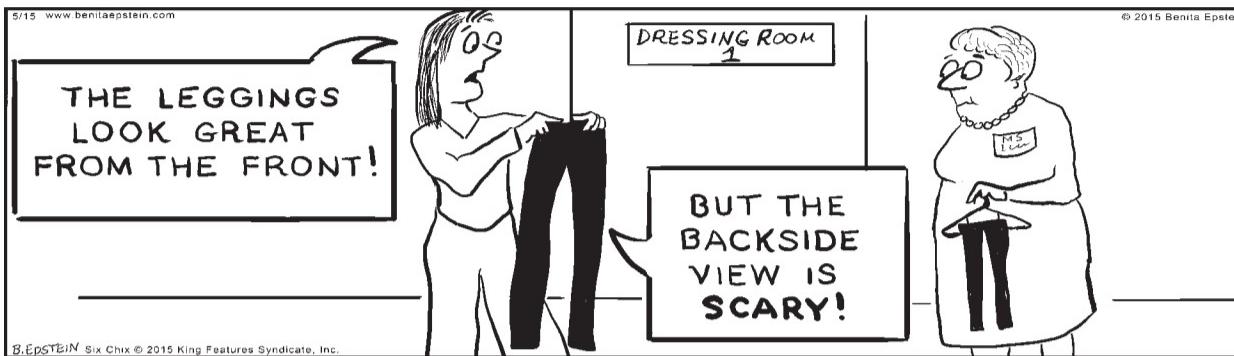
Fifth, there is the time horizon. There are many reasons family businesses do better, for a time, than nonfamily businesses. The senior people are connected by intense and sometimes altruistic bonds of trust. But one reason is that families often run the business for the long term, to pass it down as a legacy to those not yet born.

Sunday is Mother's Day, when we celebrate the powerful ways mothers shape their children. Families are unequal. Some mothers - and some fathers, husbands and wives - shape their kin with extraordinary power, and in certain directions. We should fight unfair advantages like legacy admissions, but we wouldn't want to live in a society in which family influence didn't happen. □

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



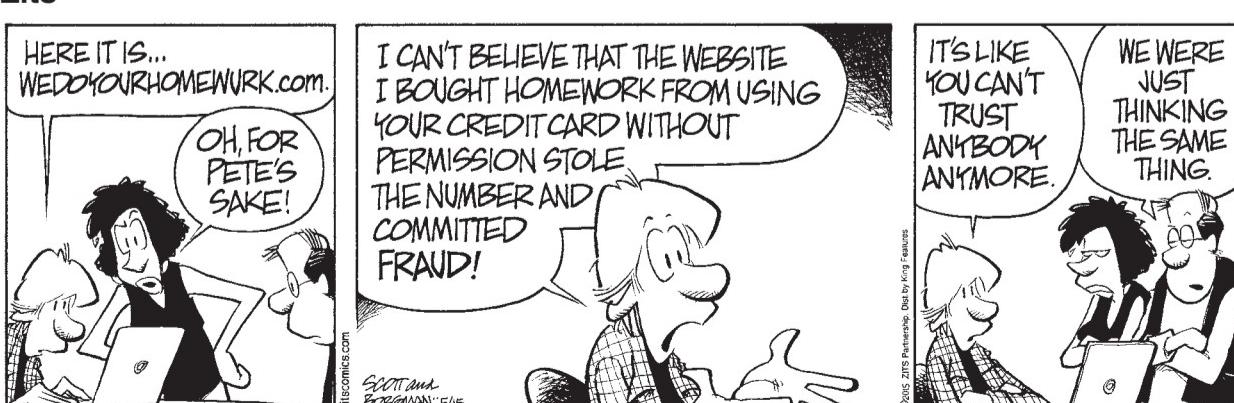
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	6	7		3								
1			8	9							2	
2	4			1							8	
3										9		
5		6		3	7							
6		3	1								7	
9				8	6							

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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5/15

1	5	6	9	2	4	7	8	3				
2	4	7	3	8	6	5	9	1				
8	9	3	7	1	5	4	2	6				
7	2	8	4	9	1	6	3	5				
5	1	9	8	6	3	2	7	4				
3	6	4	5	7	2	9	1	8				
6	3	2	1	5	7	8	4	9				
4	8	5	2	3	9	1	6	7				
9	7	1	6	4	8	3	5	2				

Yesterday's puzzle answer

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5/15/15

ACROSS

- 1 Yeltsin or Karloff
- 6 Crusty wound covering
- 10 Actor Damon
- 14 Happening
- 15 Hawaiian island
- 16 Actor ___ Katz
- 17 Past, present or future
- 18 Gardner and others
- 19 TV producer Norman ___
- 20 Horned animal
- 22 Stupor
- 24 Potter's material
- 25 ___ are the meek..."
- 26 Bricklayer's goop
- 29 Grains planted
- 30 Pennsylvania or Fifth: abbr.
- 31 Enlarges a hole
- 33 Bursting at the ___ too full
- 37 Give for a time
- 39 Tries to lose
- 41 Clubs or hearts
- 42 Lake fish
- 44 High-powered surgical beam
- 46 Emulate Jean-Claude Killy
- 47 Booby prize recipient
- 49 Second of two
- 51 Minnelli's mom
- 54 Actor Alan ___
- 55 Chairperson's meeting outline
- 56 Sitting or standing, e.g.
- 60 Soft cheese
- 61 Bleachers level
- 63 Do penance
- 64 Pleads
- 65 Outer garment
- 66 Memos
- 67 Strong urges
- 68 Luau dance
- 69 Browned bread
- 72 Finished; done
- 78 City near Lake Tahoe
- 79 Make a smudge worse
- 82 Felt sick
- 84 Vienna's nation: abbr.
- 86 Recipe verb
- 88 Monotony
- 90 Finds a buyer for
- 93 Warty amphibian
- 95 Glowing
- 98 Grab
- 99 Voice amplifier
- 101 Talkative
- 102 See eye to eye
- 103 Rule as king
- 104 Vital artery
- 106 Ring out
- 107 Smidgen
- 108 Dollar bills
- 109 Robin's home
- 110 Debtor's note

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

L	O	B	E	R	A	M	P	S	E	B	B	S
U	P	N	A	W	A	I	T	M	E	A	L	
R	E	A	L	V	E	R	G	E	P	A	L	
E	N	R	A	G	E	D	L	A	B	O	R	
R	A	N										
D	R	A	G	S	P	O	T	S	E	R	B	S
R	I	F	E	P	U	B	T	R	U	E	N	
A	S	I	C	A	T	E	N	L	I	E		
F	E	R	E	R	A	N	D	P	A	G		
T	R	E	E	D	D	I	D	M	I	X		
C	A	M	E	L	D	O	A					
E	M	P	E	R	O	S	O	N	E	S		
G	I	L	D	V	I	A	L	S	I	C	K	Y
G	L	E	E	D	D	E	E	S	H	I	P	
S	E	A	S	R	E	S	T	T	O	D	O	

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5/15/15

DOWN

- 1 Phi ___ Kappa
- 2 Microwave, e.g.
- 3 Money paid to a landlord
- 4 Bug
- 5 Outstanding
- 6 Like dishwater
- 7 Prehistoric home
- 8 Finder's cry
- 9 Hustle and —
- 10 Thick syrup
- 11 Prayer closings
- 12 Vestige; small bit remaining
- 13 Exhausted
- 21 Rowed
- 23 Cincinnati team
- 25 Outperforms
- 26 Thick sweet drink
- 27 Finished; done
- 28 City near Lake Tahoe
- 29 Make a smudge worse
- 32 Felt sick
- 34 Vienna's nation: abbr.
- 36 Recipe verb
- 38 Monotony
- 40 Finds a buyer for
- 43 Warty amphibian
- 45 Glowing
- 48 Grab
- 50 Skin picture
- 51 Talkative
- 52 See eye to eye
- 53 Rule as king
- 54 Vital artery
- 56 Ring out
- 57 Smidgen
- 58 Dollar bills
- 59 Robin's home
- 62 Debtor's note

Baltimore: Defense of 6 officers based on the details

SERGE F. KOVALESKI

MICHAEL WINES

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BALTIMORE - Less than two weeks after six police officers were charged in the arrest and death of Freddie Gray, the officers' lawyers and supporters have sketched the outline of a defense, taking aim at the substance of some of the most serious accusations, as well as at procedural issues.

Last Friday, lawyers for the six officers filed to dismiss all charges and asserted that Marilyn J. Mosby, the state's attorney for Baltimore City, was so tainted by conflicts of interest that she could not have fairly judged the merits of the case. They also argued that she misread the law in charging that Gray's arrest for carrying an illegal knife was without foundation.

Those are threads in a broader narrative that is expected to challenge Mosby's main accusation, laid out in her charging documents. She says the officers illegally arrested and shackled Gray, flouting police rules and standards of decency in loading him into a police van without required safety restraints and ignoring his pleas for help during an extended ride.

Gray suffered a fall or other accident during the ride, Mosby said, which led to his death April 19. She charged one officer with second-degree murder and manslaughter, three more with manslaughter, and two others with assault and false imprisonment. The officers, who have been suspended, are free on bail; a grand jury is expected to consider soon whether to indict them on the charges. In interviews, lawyers for some officers and others familiar with the defense strategy paint a vastly different picture of what happened to Gray, who was 25 when he died. The officers, they say, were acting by the book, and they had no cause to believe the arrest would cost Gray his life. □

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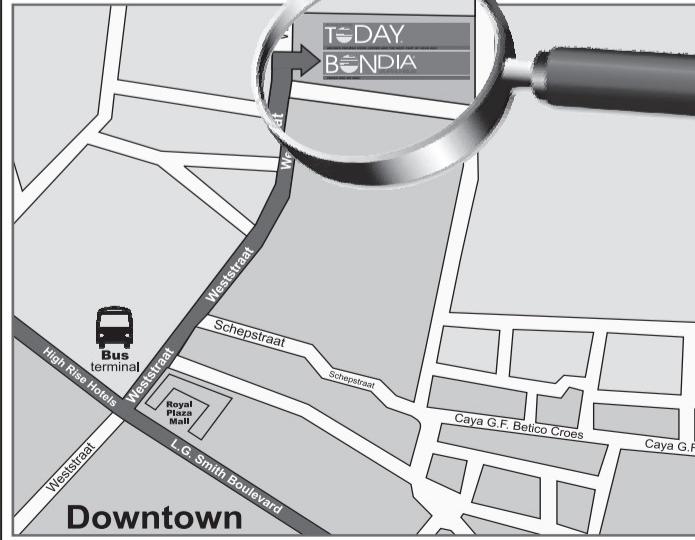
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More than 40 percent of bee hives in U.S. died in past year

SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

More than two out of five American honeybee colonies died in the past year, and surprisingly the worst die-off was in the summer, according to a federal survey.

Since April 2014, beekeepers lost 42.1 percent of their colonies, the second-highest rate in nine years, according to an annual survey conducted by a bee partnership that includes the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"What we're seeing with this bee problem is just a loud signal that there's some bad things happening with our agro-ecosystems," said study co-author Keith Delaplane at the University of Georgia. "We just happen to notice it with the honeybee because they are so easy to count."

But it's not quite as dire as it sounds. That's because after a colony dies, beekeepers then split their surviving colonies, start new ones, and the numbers



In this Jan. 28, 2014, file photo, a hive of honey bees is on display at the Vermont Beekeeping Supply booth at the 82nd annual Vermont Farm Show at the Champlain Valley Expo in Essex Jct., Vt.

Associated Press

go back up again, said Delaplane and study co-author Dennis vanEngelsdorp of the University of Maryland. But that pushes the bees to their limited, he said.

What shocked the ento-

mologists is that is the first time they've noticed bees dying more in the summer than the winter, vanEngelsdorp said. The survey found beekeepers lost 27.4 percent of their colonies this summer. That's up

from 19.8 percent the previous summer.

Seeing massive colony losses in summer is like seeing "a higher rate of flu deaths in the summer than winter," vanEngelsdorp said. "You just don't ex-

pect colonies to die at this rate in the summer."

Oklahoma, Illinois, Iowa, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Maine and Wisconsin all saw more than 60 percent of their hives die since April 2014, according to the survey.

"Most of the major commercial beekeepers get a dark panicked look in their eyes when they discuss these losses and what it means to their businesses," said Pennsylvania State University entomology professor Diana Cox-Foster. She wasn't part of the study, but praised it.

Delaplane and vanEngelsdorp said a combination of mites, poor nutrition and pesticides are to blame for the bee deaths.

Dick Rogers, chief beekeeper for pesticide-maker Bayer, said the loss figure is "not unusual at all" and said the survey shows an end result of more colonies: 2.74 million hives in 2015, up from 2.64 million in 2014.

That doesn't mean bee health is improving or stable, vanEngelsdorp said. □

David Letterman on retirement: It's time, but he's torn

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — You don't think of David Letterman as a stop-and-smell-the-flowers type, but here he is, at a major turning point yet savoring his chocolate milkshake.

Perched on a stool in a fast-food restaurant beside the Ed Sullivan Theater, where he has hosted "Late Show" for two decades but will do so only a bit longer, Dave unwinds from that day's taping while, more than once, he comments on his shake's deliciousness.

He also thinks today's show was excellent, a surprising appraisal from this famously self-critical star. Cher did a surprise walk-on. Martin Short brought down the house with his musical eulogy to Dave. Norah Jones sang "Don't Know Why" and everyone got misty.

"I wish tonight's show had been the last show," says Letterman. "Tonight should have been the last show. I don't know what we're gonna do for the next two weeks."

It isn't hard to detect, or understand, the simmering ambivalence in Dave's decision to take his leave after 33 years in late night and 22 years hosting CBS' "Late Show," on May 20.



In this March 2, 2015 file photo, David Letterman attends "An Evening of SeriousFun Celebrating the Legacy of Paul Newman", hosted by the SeriousFun Children's Network at Avery Fisher Hall in New York. After 33 years hosting late night talk shows, Letterman will retire on May 20.

Associated Press

But by now he's done it all. Letterman has carved a place in cultural history with his pioneering brand of postmodern silliness that collared "Late Night" fans on his arrival in 1982 and subsequently was absorbed into the Age of Irony he played a major role in charting. This legacy-in-the-making was long ago coined "Lettermanesque."

But don't talk legacy with Dave. He swiftly raises his deflector shield. "The real credit goes to the writers," he insists. "It was their show that I was doing, especially early on. And then I got to a point I knew how to do what they were wanting me to do. "We had guys who had worked at the Harvard Lampoon!" he says, flash-

ing a grin. "I attended university in Muncie, Indiana." Now he's nearing the end of a record-breaking, surely never-to-be-matched run that exceeds even Johnny Carson's 30 years on "The Tonight Show." "God, it's been 6,000 shows!" he says. "I used to have these conversations with (wife) Regina: 'How much longer can I do

this? How much longer do I WANT to do this?'

"But it was so much fun tonight, just really fun," he says again. "I'm really, really torn. I know why I shouldn't be doing it anymore, but these last few months have been sooo easy."

No wonder. As the days count down, love for Dave is escalating. "With a simple retirement announcement, every day I'm Salesman of the Month."

Letterman's life was anything but easy in October 2009, when an extortion plot compelled him to acknowledge on the air that he had been sexually involved with women on his staff. He weathered that storm, largely thanks to a candid and contrite accounting to his viewers.

"It was the worst time of my life. I remember just thinking, 'Oh my God, I've ruined my family,' and that became the only concern. And then: Oh, yeah, you could get fired!"

But on Dave's crisis meter, the scandal far exceeded his emergency quintuple bypass operation in January 2000.

"The heart surgery was FUN! People would come and see me and bring me things. And the doctors were wonderful. □

D'oh! Is 'The Simpsons' parting company with Harry Shearer?

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — An escalating contract dispute suggests that Harry Shearer may be exiting "The Simpsons," where he has voiced several of its characters since the Fox cartoon series debuted in 1989.

In a pair of Twitter posts on Thursday, Shearer said re-upping with the show would have denied him "what we've always had: the freedom to do other work."

Hours later, "Simpsons" executive producer Al Jean tweeted, "The show will go on, made by people who love it..." In another post,

he resolved to "recast if Harry does not return." Yet another tweet seemed to leave the door open for a rapprochement: "In life I never say never."

Shearer voices characters including Simpsons neighbor Ned Flanders, billionaire Mr. Burns and his kowtowing aide, Smithers.

Fox recently announced picking up "The Simpsons" for two more seasons — its 27th and 28th.

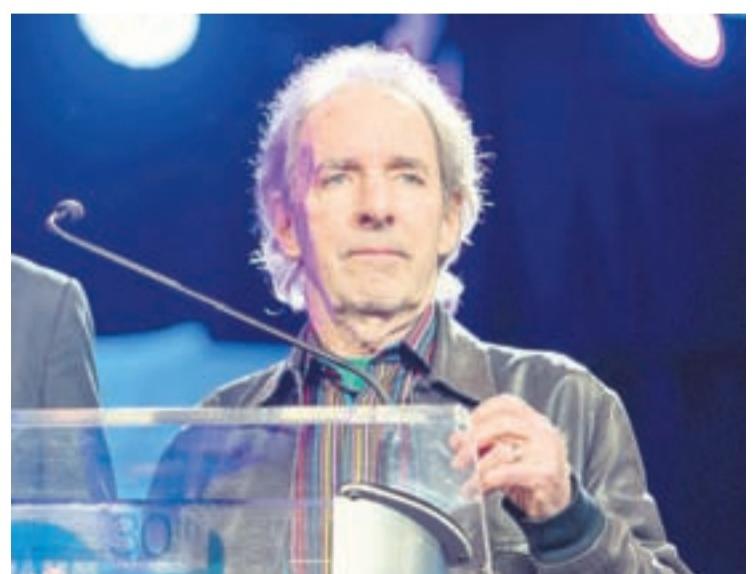
A statement from Jean and fellow "Simpsons" executive producers James L. Brooks and Matt Groening said Shearer "was offered the same deal the rest of the cast accepted, and

passed."

Shearer did not respond to a request for comment.

The multi-tasking Shearer, 71, has charted a diverse career as an actor, writer, musician and producer, both before and since becoming part of the "Simpsons" troupe.

Also known for his starring role in the 1984 mockumentary classic "This Is Spinal Tap," as well as for hosting public radio's weekly "Le Show" for more than 30 years, he recently produced and starred in "Nixon's The One," portraying President Richard Nixon in a TV dramatization of the secret White House tapes.



In this Jan. 24, 2015 file photo, Harry Shearer appears at the 30th annual TEC Awards during the 2015 National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) show in Anaheim, Calif.

Associated Press

Thursday's public acknowledgement of the ongoing dispute, he tweeted, was prompted by word from the lawyer of "Simpsons" executive producer Brooks that declared, "Show will go on, Harry will not be part of it, wish him the best."

Shearer tweeted, "Of course, I wish him the very best." □

M. Night Shyamalan moves to TV for 10-episode miniseries

ALICIA RANCILIO

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — M. Night Shyamalan, who had a surprise reveal in his film "The Sixth Sense," says he feels envious about the plot twist in his new TV series, "Wayward Pines."

Shyamalan told Blake Crouch — who wrote the book "Pines" on which the series is based — "that if people mistakenly think that I wrote it, I'm not going to dissuade them. I'm just going to go with it," he said with a laugh in a recent interview.

Shyamalan is the executive producer of the 10-episode miniseries that premieres Thursday on Fox (9 p.m. EDT).

Matt Dillon stars as a Secret Service agent who arrives in a tiny, picturesque Idaho town (that could be called Creepyville, USA) to investigate a case, but learns he can't leave. No one can. And breaking the rules and trying to escape or talking about the past can be deadly.

Cast members also include Terrence Howard, Melissa Leo, Toby Jones and Juliette Lewis. Shyamalan said that after casting Dil-



This photo provided by Fox shows Terrence Howard as Sheriff Pope, in the "Don't Discuss Your Life Before" episode of "Wayward Pines," airing Thursday, May 21, 2015 (9:00-10:00 p.m. ET/PT) on Fox.

Associated Press

lon, it was Leo's role that helped shape his vision of the series.

"There's a part of a nurse, kind of like Nurse Ratched (from "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"), and I was unsure how to cast it. When I heard Melissa Leo's name I totally understood how to do the entire show.

"... Everybody said yes and it just snowballed into this incredible cast of world-

class actors," he said.

Making the leap from the big screen to the small one wasn't easy. The pace is faster, which Shyamalan is candid about having difficulty with.

"There was a big moment where I asked Fox, 'Can we just stop? Can we just take a pause for a second?'" he said. "They were so gracious. It was all me with a sense of learning how to do

this."

Shyamalan said he and the writers worked on the last half of the show for about six weeks. "Hopefully that will account for the fact that there wasn't a lull or a dip, but a real escalation in the series to the end," he said.

Dillon, whose films include "The Outsiders," "Beautiful Girls" and "There's Something About Mary," recalls

a time when accepting a TV role seemed like a big gamble.

"Television for a long time, let's be honest, was very restrictive, both creatively and schedule-wise. It didn't make a lot of sense," he said. "If you're making a decision to go to work based on a three-month schedule (for a film), why would you say, 'I'm going to commit for four years and I don't know what it is.' It felt somewhat compromised.

"But now that's not the case. It's actually kind of the opposite from television.

All they care about (with film) is: Is a character likable? And that's not important. What's important is: Is the character engaging?"

Howard said TV roles are more financially rewarding. "You realize the money is in TV," said Howard, who also stars in the Fox series "Empire." "The retirement is TV. Now I've got two shows and hopefully one of them will pay off and my kids will have the retirement because the parents never really get it. It's the kids who inherit the farm." □



This Oct. 20, 2014 file photo shows George Stephanopoulos at the 24th Annual Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame Awards in New York.

Associated Press

DAVID BAUDER

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — ABC News anchor George Stephanopoulos will not moderate a Republican presidential debate next winter, part of the fallout from reports that the network's top political anchor

contributed \$75,000 over a three-year period to the Clinton Foundation.

Stephanopoulos voluntarily stepped away from the Feb. 6 debate, said ABC News spokeswoman Heather Riley on Thursday. It is one of nine debates sanctioned by the Repub-

Stephanopoulos will not moderate Republican debate

lian National Committee. The co-host of "Good Morning America" and host of the Sunday morning public affairs program "This Week" earlier had apologized for not disclosing his contributions to his employer and viewers. The three donations of \$25,000 each in 2012, 2013 and 2014 were made to the foundation set up by former President Bill Clinton because of the organization's work on global AIDS prevention and deforestation, Stephanopoulos said.

The network news division said in a statement that "we stand behind him."

Some Republicans have harbored long suspicions about Stephanopoulos because of his past life as a top aide to Clinton during

his 1992 presidential campaign and in the White House afterward. Stephanopoulos joined ABC News in 1997, and Riley said the proof of his objectivity as a reporter "is in his work" over 18 years. With Clinton's wife, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, running for the Democratic presidential nomination, the issues have been revived for ABC News. Sen. Rand Paul, a Kentucky Republican running for president, told The New York Times that because Stephanopoulos has been close to the Clintons, "that there would be a conflict of interest if he tried to be a moderator of any sort." The donations to the Clinton foundation were first reported in Politico as \$50,000. But in checking

back in his records, Stephanopoulos found an additional \$25,000 donation in 2012, Riley said.

Stephanopoulos has reported on Peter Schweizer's book, "Clinton Cash," which traces the public involvement of organizations that have donated to the Clinton Foundation. Stephanopoulos interviewed Schweizer on "This Week." The news anchor said that he believed his contributions were a matter of public record.

"However, in hindsight, I should have taken the extra step of personally disclosing my donations to my employer and to the viewers on the air during the recent news stories about the foundation," he said. "I apologize." □

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